

THE EVIDENCES AGAINST CHRISTIANITY

JOHN S. HITTELL

Second Edition
In Two Volumes

NEW YORK:
CALVIN BLANCHARD
76 Nassau Street.

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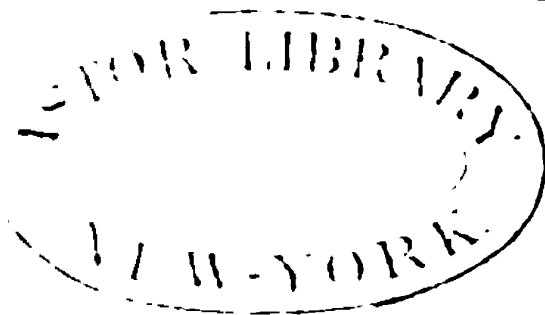
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Office of the District Court of the United States,
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PREFACE.

"The love of truth, a deep thirst for it, a deliberate purpose to seek it, and hold it fast, may be considered as the very foundation of human culture and dignity."
— *W. E. Channing.*

STRONG convictions that all superstitions are pernicious, that Christianity is a superstition, that abundant evidence can be produced of its false, superstitious and pernicious character, that this evidence may be presented in such a way as to be perfectly irresistible to every intelligent and impartial man, that this presentation were better made in my poor way than not made at all, and that hostility to systems, believed to be superstitious, is a duty which every man owes to himself and to society—these are my motives in writing and publishing this book. Christianity comes home to, and has a strong influence upon every man who deserves to be called "civilized." He cannot be ignorant that it is rejected by a large proportion of the learned men of the age, and it is his duty to desire to know the reason. No man can look with contempt on the religious opinions of Hume, Gibbon, Paine, Burns, Byron, Shelley, Froude, Bentham, Romilly, Bowring, Carlyle, Emerson, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Greg, Parker, Martineau, Hennell, Montaigne, Bayle, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, D'Alembert, La Place, Arago, Mirabeau, Napoleon, Buffon, Comte, Cousin, Spinoza, Lessing, Wieland, Goethe, Frederick the Great, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, De Wette, Feuerbach and Strauss—no man is so exalted that the opinions of such men, on the greatest questions which occupy the human mind, can be unworthy of his notice. On the contrary, it

is the duty of every man to learn those opinions if he can "It is high treason to humanity to be indifferent about religion ;" * it is high treason to truth to adopt an opinion without having giving both sides, for and against, an equally fair hearing. The evidences for Christianity have been compiled by a number of very able writers : so that the student can gain a comprehensive and clear view of all that can be said for that system in a few hours : but previous to the publication of this book, no such compilation had been made of the evidences on the other side : and the opinions of those, who had written against Christianity, were scattered through hundreds of volumes, many of which are with difficulty to be found, and require a great expense of time and money for their examination. Besides, the writings of some of these authors are not easily to be understood, even by the thoroughbred student, and are quite unintelligible to the masses, who depend for their support upon their physical labor. From the skeptical writings of these and other great men, I have tried to compile a book for the million,—to give within a small space, a clear view of the principal evidences against Christianity. If the attempt to save labor in the acquisition of a knowledge of what has been written against the Bible, or if the diffusion of such knowledge be wrong, let the sin be on my own head. And if I am to be punished by my fellow-men, whether the punishment consist in bodily pains or in denunciation, abuse and excommunication, I ask only that when they raise the hand to strike, each one shall, for himself, declare "I am without sin : I never had any doubt of the truth of the religious dogmas which I profess to believe."

A much respected friend writes to me, as my book is about to go to press, "If I might recommend anything, it would be to cultivate the tone of Strauss, who examined the

ZSCHOKKE.

subject not as an interested inhabitant of this world, but as if he had happened here from another planet, and was merely giving an account of things *here* to his friend—say, in Jupiter.” There is undoubtedly something admirable in that tone : but I must confess that I cannot, neither would I if I could, assume it. The war against superstition is not with me an affair undertaken merely because I have no other way of passing my time—it is not an affair, the progress and result of which will furnish me with equal amusement or be looked upon with equal indifference, whether my cause be successful or not. The religious tyrant is not less hateful to me than the political despot or the foreign oppressor. As I would feel a bitter indignation at the wrongs inflicted by the latter, so do I at the evils caused by the former. And this indignation I shall not attempt to conceal. All the earnestness of which my soul is capable, is enlisted in this struggle. As under certain circumstances, I would deliberately shed the blood of my fellow-men in defense of my country so now I shall not shun the call which I feel to wound the feelings and the prejudices of the partizans of a maleficent creed.

Though I cannot but rejoice at times in the strength of my cause, and exult in the confidence of its victory ; though the very difficulty of the task which I have undertaken and the might of the enemies whom I oppose, are such as to give a keen pleasure, to one who can appreciate “the rapture of the strife,” yet there are other times, when I am sad and sorry that such a labor should have appeared to me in the guise of a duty. The feelings would have to be unusually blunt in a man who could feel unalloyed pleasure in endeavoring to overthrow a system which is woven in with the heart-strings of many of those who are dearest to him. “To oppose* the institution which your fathers

* THEODORE PARKER.

loved in centuries gone by ; to sweep off the altars, forms and usages which ministered to your mother's piety, helped her bear the cross and bitter ills of life, to sunder your ties of social sympathy, to destroy the rites associated with the aspiring dream of childhood, and its earliest prayer, and the sunny days of youth—to disturb these because they weave ehains, invisible but despotic, which bind the arm and fetter the foot, and confine the heart ;—to hew down the hoary tree under whose shade the nations played their game of life, and found in death the clod of the valley sweet to their weary bosom—to destroy all this because it poisons the air and stifles the breath of the world—it is a sad and bitter thing.”

A large class of my countrymen—a very respectable class, a class to whose opinions I am in no wise insensible—will consider the publication of this book, or even the public avowal of the principal doctrines advanced in it, as proof that the author is a very unwise, even a bad man,—an enemy to God, to religion, to morality and to society. Unwise and indiscreet I may be, but I am not conscious of wrong in doing what I now do. On the contrary, I feel a strong hope that this work will do good, that it will exercise an influence (perhaps a very weak one) to make men happier and better : and I have the strongest confidence that it can do no evil. It is written carefully and conscientiously and does not, to the author's knowledge or belief, contain one untrue statement or unfair argument, or one objection (to Christianity) which can be satisfactorily controverted. I have not argued the Christian side of the question elaborately : indeed, I have given very little of the matter which goes to fill up most of the books on the “Evidences of [for] Christianity,” but it is because I thought *that* matter rendered completely worthless by what is herein contained. But even had I considered any or all of the Christian argu-

mentation to be excellent and unanswerable, it would have been useless for me to have here inserted, that which has elsewhere been published in able, clear, comprehensive and concise essays, which are to be found in every library and book-shop. I now refer the reader to the works in favor of the Bible by Paley, Alexander, Chalmers, Palfrey, Channing and Watson: and I invite him to weigh their arguments and evidences, step by step, with my own. The superior merit of my cause more than compensates for my great inferiority in literary ability. "The reader will find" here "none of those arts which are commonly employed by disputants either to perplex a good cause or to palliate a bad one, no subtle refinements, forced constructions or evasive distinctions, but plain reasonings grounded on plain facts, and published with an honest and disinterested view to free the minds of men from an inveterate imposture, which through a long succession of ages has disgraced" religion, "and tyrannized over the reason and senses of the Christian world." *

The first edition of "*The Evidences against Christianity*," published in San Francisco, was honored with a number of notices and criticisms by Californian newspapers, which generally condemned the publication, not because Christianity is true or because the ideas advanced in the book are false, but because, as they hinted, it is necessary to respect the religious prejudices of the people, because the people must have some "religion," and because I proposed to overthrow Christianity without offering any other "religion" to put in its place. Many of them asserted, directly or indirectly, that a false religion is not necessarily pernicious in its influence, and that no amount of sincerity, no purity and strength of benevolent motive, could justify me for sending forth such a book. I do not agree with them and in these

* THE REV. DR MIDDLETON. Free Inquiry.

matters, I cannot follow the dictation of others. He who wishes to do credit to humanity, must seek his rule of action within and not without.

I am well aware that many illustrious men, including a number of prominent "Infidels" have said that some religious creed, some religion dependent for its existence on sentiment or superstition is necessary for the common people—that a philosophical creed, a religion founded solely on reason would never suffice to protect them from immorality. I shall meet this, like every other important, consideration connected with the main question at issue, in a direct manner : although it is not consistent with my main purpose, to argue at length the influences of belief on the morality of nations. I regret that we have no essay containing all that might be said of the pernicious moral consequences which, as the Christians assert, would ensue upon the total extinction of Christianity and the universal reign of deism, pantheism, or atheism. In becoming the active assailant of the Bible, I follow the example of many good and great men. It is true that most of the great anti-Christian authors wrote so as to be understood only by the learned, but one main cause, of their not addressing themselves to the million was, that the million were not capable, in earlier times, of weighing the evidence and appreciating the arguments.

Superstition is grounded upon ignorance, which latter must be removed before the former can be overthrown. The Mohammedan who has been merely convinced that Mohammed is not the prophet of God, will believe in some other prophet, who may be little better than Mohammed. When a man is so ignorant as to ask another man the way to Heaven, he is bound to be superstitious, and it does not matter much whom he asks; and it does not help him greatly to discover that *such a one* is not the right one. His

need will remain the same, until his mind is so cultivated that he understands Heaven to be a place which exists only in his own conception—until he understands that all the assertions of the priests, about infinite and eternal happiness in another life after the death of the body, are and must be pure fables.

In ancient times the downfall of one form of superstition was always followed by the rise of another ; and there are many who may think that it will be of little use to overthrow Christianity, if other superstitions are to take its place. Science and philosophy are the sole power which are certain to dispel superstition, and teach the only doctrines which should occupy the place of the expelled demon : but they work slowly : they scarcely take a step in an age among the masses of the people. However, let us not despair. The world does move, and of late the motion has been accelerating wonderfully. Let us not curse the human tree because it does not bear figs as we might wish : “let us wait ; * let us dig about it : in time it shall put forth fruit.” Science is slow, but we know also that she is sure. Philosophy, by its very nature, is destined to be the common property of all mankind. “The discoveries, † which in one age are confined to the studious and enlightened few, become in the next the established creed of the learned, and, in the third, form part of the elementary principles of education.”

In my war against the Christian superstition, I seek to break down the superstition as well as the Christianity. I have endeavored, with very limited success beyond doubt, to set forth clearly, to popularize a number of important principles of science and philosophy. I have sought, by giving a number of interesting extracts from great authors,

* THEODORE PARKER.

† DUGALD STEWART.

to kindle a desire in my readers to look farther, to pursue those trains of thought which I have brought to their attention. Even if my attempts to popularize certain doctrines of science and philosophy be complete failures, and if I should know that success in exposing the absurdity of Christianity would be followed by the adoption of some other form of superstition, I should still persevere ; for the overthrow of a religious belief is always accompanied by a period of mental activity which must be beneficial. It is probable that the new superstition will always be a little better than the old one ; man cannot outgrow many particular forms without learning some valuable general principles.

The system, which I propose to sweep away, has lost its vitality, and a considerable portion of it has already turned into corruption. "Mankind* has outgrown the popular theology." "No man† can go with his thoughts about him into one of our churches, without feeling that what hold the public worship had on men is gone or going. It has lost its grasp on the affection of the good and the fear of the bad. * * It is already beginning to indicate character and religion to withdraw from the religious-meetings. * * The prayers and even the dogmas of the Church are like the Zodiac of Denderah and astronomical monuments of the Hindoos—wholly insulated from anything, now extant in the life and business of the people." Christianity exists only by sufferance and cannot exist so much longer. Every intelligent man must see that all the evidences and arguments against it, must come within the reach of the people at no distant day. Why should I not endeavor to place them in their hands now ? I have yet to learn that it is wrong to save labor to others by compiling, ar-

* THEODORE PARKER.

† EMERSON.

ranging, digesting, condensing, and republishing in a harmonious whole the scattered thoughts of able and learned men on any important print of religious or social philosophy. My justification, however, before my own conscience, depends not on the example of others, or on the knowledge that if I should not attack Christianity, somebody else would, but upon the belief that duty requires me to do my utmost to overthrow a great system of falsehood.

To consider the attainment of all the possible truth in regard to religion as a great and substantial blessing—to understand that that truth is to be attained only by the bold exercise of reason and submission to all its clear conclusions as of the highest tribunal, whose decisions are infallible until questioned or revoked by itself upon complaint of doubt (truth's prosecuting attorney in the court of philosophy)—to examine the affirmative and negative sides of every religious question before believing either—to begin and continue the examination with a desire to see the whole force of all the evidence and arguments—to examine as fully as means will permit and the importance of the subject justify—to examine both sides with equal thoroughness and equal zeal if possible—to feel throughout the examination that religious truth must be good, and error evil,—to disbelieve all the punishments, threatened in a future Hell for untrue religious opinions adopted after honest and impartial investigation; or if that Hell be believed, to scorn and defy it and its author—to be zealously attached to all religious opinions deliberately formed—if free to declare them openly, and, if enslaved, (by the fear of physical or mental pain for self or others) to lament the slavery because of the restriction upon the expression of belief—to hate and despise all cant and hypocrisy—to pity all canters and hypocrites—to consider the open declaration of unpopular religious opinions seriously entertained as in itself a sign of

virtue great in proportion to their unpopularity—and to be exceedingly cautious in abusing or condemning those, who after having looked at both sides thoroughly, have seen fit to adopt the “other side”—these appear to me to be among the highest duties of every man, no matter what may be his position in society.

It would be horrible to believe that the knowledge of religious truth may be a curse—to think that if there be no God-given gospel, and no God-ordained teachers, it were better to accept a forged book-revelation and a mercenary, lying priesthood, and to have their influence pervading and governing every individual portion of the social system. It would be horrible to believe that reason, and impartial, skeptical investigation were our worst enemies, and that superstition and a blind adherence to the past, were our truest friends. It would be horrible to believe that a demon of untruth, a father of lies, is the omnipotent governor of the universe. If I could believe that love of truth for its own sake were a base impulse ; that the search for truth, with an utter disregard of the fate of traditionary creeds and systems, were a sin ; that truth itself were seriously endangered by bold investigation, open statements of evidence, and fair argument ; that duty—regard for the best interests of society—true love for mankind—an earnest devotion to whatever might conduce most to the greatest welfare of the greatest number of the human race—requires the conscientious freethinker to act the hypocrite through life, and carefully conceal his opinions on the fundamental points of religion—if I could believe all this, and could believe that the general acceptation of the doctrines, advanced in this book, would result in the perdition of humanity, its condemnation to the horriest hell ever conceived by religious superstition and fanaticism, I should be tempted to exclaim “Down with us ! Down into Hell at once ! Better etc-

nal and the most agonizing pain in punishment of a righteous indignation and resistance, rather than quiet submission to the demoniac government, which declares our holiest aspirations to be unpardonable offenses, which punishes our noblest and most heroic labors as the greatest of all crimes ! ”

It may be that I am in error. Although I have satisfied myself by an examination, neither hasty nor superficial, of the whole subject, that the letter of the Bible and its spirit—in so far as that differs from natural religion and morality—are false and productive of evil ; that they form one of the first and greatest barriers, now obstructing the social, political, and moral progress of the human race ; that they cannot exist much longer in general acceptance among civilized nations ; and that the sooner they be stricken down, the better it will be for all—although I have satisfied myself of all this, my opinion may be incorrect. Many men, far greater and better than myself, have held opinions adverse to my own : and if they were right, I must be wrong. But I have the consolation of thinking that, if the Bible were the word of God, no attack which I could make upon it by an appeal to reason, would do the least injury or discredit to it. But rather I might hope, that, if my book should find readers, it may aid to dispel various crude, superstitious and debasing notions prevalent among Christians and taught by the Church. Such are the belief in the miracles of the ancient and modern priests, in ghosts, in the possession of the human body by devils, in an anthropomorphic God, in special providences, in the duty of the people to submit unresistingly to their rulers, in the virtue of persecuting heretics, in the sinfulness of unbelief and many other kindred tenets. The skeptical writings of the last century had a great influence to purify the Christian faith on these and similar points of doctrine, and I know no rea-

son why good should not be done in the same way now. Why should I not aspire to exercise a little of that beneficent influence which flowed from the pen of that much calumniated benefactor of his race—Voltaire? that Voltaire of whom Brougham * says "We owe to him the habit of scrutinizing, both in sacred matter and in profane, the merits of whatever is presented for our belief, of examining boldly the foundations of received opinions, in making probability a part of the consideration in all that is related, of calling in plain reason and common sense, to assist in our councils when grave matters are under discussion; nor can any one, since the days of Luther, be named to whom the spirit of free inquiry, nay, the emancipation from spiritual tyranny, owes a more lasting debt of gratitude." Happy should I be, could I know that, in a distant time, learned men should occasionally meet my name as that of one, who, with pure motives and by proper means, had done a little to break the yoke of "spiritual tyranny."

The chief characteristics of the orthodox religious philosophy of the present age are a dread of free inquiry, a distrust of reason, a terror of truth herself, unless her friends give security, previous to her appearance, that she shall wear the yoke of the established system. If I can do nothing more, I may hope to change this state of affairs. I may hope to have a little influence in inducing Christians to build their faith on the solid rock of reason, instead of upon the sand of their grandmothers' traditions, as they have generally done heretofore: and in that case my labor would not have been in vain. The bellwethers of the orthodox flocks are loud in their lamentations over the decline of "Vital Christianity," but they never advise the only remedy—strong doses of free inquiry. Until that medicine be resorted to, formalism and hypocrisy will not cease to rule in

* HENRY LORD BROUGHAM. *Life of Voltaire.*

the Christian Churches. However, as I have said, my expectations and incentives in the present labor are not to purify Christianity, but to aid in breaking it down entirely. If I should fail in all these high purposes and hopes, I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing that I have fought boldly and zealously against a seeming evil, and that I have gathered the weapons, and prepared them for the continuation of the strife, so that some great warrior, who may come after me, shall find them all ready to his hand, and need only lay hold, and go on conquering and to conquer.

Full of faith in the intelligence and morality of the mass of the American people, and satisfied that for them, at least, light on both sides of such a question as Christianity, cannot be evil; and fearing (except for the ill performance of my task) no literal or figurative cross or stake, which have been threatened from time immemorial against all religious teachers, who should proclaim the esoteric doctrines long taught to the initiated only, I shall not stop short at the exoteric, but will freely speak the whole truth, as I understand it, and as it may be applicable in this place. "I persuade myself that the life and faculties of man, at the best but short and limited, cannot be employed more rationally or laudably than in the search of knowledge, and especially of that sort which relates to our duty and our happiness. In these inquiries, therefore, wherever I perceive any glimmering of truth before me, I steadily pursue and endeavor to trace it to its source, without any reserve or caution of pushing the discovery too far, or opening too great a glare of it to the public. I look upon the discovery of anything which is true as a valuable acquisition to society, which cannot possibly hurt or obstruct the good effect of any other truth whatsoever." *

* The reader is requested, after reading each of the following chapters of this book to turn to the Appendix and glance over the notes, authorities, and illustrations of statements made and opinions expressed.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

DOMAIN OF REASON IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

‘Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy.’—PAUL, Col. II. 8.

“Shake off all fears and servile prejudices, under which weak minds are servilely crouched. Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of a God ; because if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason than that of blindfolded fear.”—JEFFERSON.

§ 1. The reader will not—perhaps should not—examine this book, without recalling to mind the fact that, by reading it, he violates the command, or, at least, the wishes of the Christian Church. Neither Moses, nor Jesus, none of the prophets, or apostles, invited a skeptical investigation of their miraculous powers, or of the truth of their doctrines. Of those processes of reasoning which are now used by learned men in testing new doctrines in science and philosophy, the ancient Jews had little, or no knowledge, and their religious books took no account of them. Doubt of the divine authority of the priests was a great crime under the Mosaic law, and the greatest of sins under the Christian dispensation. Under both blind faith is a great merit, a positive virtue. “The first thing Jesus Christ requires, is faith and submission. This is commonly his first precept, and also of his apostles : ‘Follow me, believe, and thou shalt be saved’ (*Luke V. 27 ; IX. 59 ; Acts XVI. 31*). Now that faith, which was required, was not obtained by a train of philosophical discussions and long reasoning, but was the gift of God, a pure grace of the Holy Ghost, which commonly fell on ignorant persons (*Mat. XI. 25*). It was not even produced in the apostles by their reflecting on the holiness of the life of Jesus Christ, and the excellencies of his doctrines and miracles. They stood in need of a revelation from God himself to know that he, whose disciples

they were, was his eternal son."* (*Mat. XVI. 17*). The apostles frequently warned their followers against philosophy,—“the beguiling serpent,”—(*2 Cor. XI*) which might lead them away from the uninquiring “simplicity that is in Christ.” The church, for many ages, had little to fear from reason, benighted in barbaric darkness, and spent little denunciation upon it; but no sooner had the minds of men been awakened by the dawn of modern civilization, than the thunders of the Vatican were hurled at those who ventured to assert, in theory or practice, the right to abandon the orthodox traditions. The ancient forms soon became too narrow for northern Europe, and she obtained some freedom by the Reformation,—freedom to think, and question the doctrines of Rome, as far as the leading reformers questioned—no more. Reason was an angel of light, when she doubted the divine authority of the Pope; but she was the bride of the devil, when she questioned the divinity of Jesus. And so it is to this day. All the orthodox Christian Churches,—Greek, Catholic, and Protestant,—discourage and denounce free inquiry. They never recommend it; and when they have the power, they invariably make it a crime. “The inquisition of public opinion,” says Jefferson, “overwhelms in practice the freedom asserted by the laws in theory.” No Christian church has ever had complete control of the legislation of a country without punishing those who published books written against its fundamental doctrines. Religious skepticism has an influence so great now that legal intolerance is becoming rare, but the social still exists. The priests and Christian newspapers never advise any one to read skeptical books; they dare not give such advice. The libraries of their orthodox theological seminaries do not contain any such books; the institution which should venture to place them within the reach of the students would be demolished at once. Fashionable publishers dare not publish such books, and fashionable booksellers dare not sell them publicly. The orthodox, religious bookdealer, who should be found selling any of the formidable books against the Bible, would be excommunicated forthwith. The church-magazines and newspapers are very careful not to speak in laudatory terms of free thinkers, or

even of liberal Christians. To abuse and malign "infidels" is considered an evidence of sincere piety ; to do justice to them is to commit an offense against religion. Bayle, knowing the prejudices of the "righteous" in this respect, thought that policy required him to apologise for not reporting more evil of atheists in his *Dictionary*, than he had done ; but he said that he had published all that he could learn against them. This feeling has gone so far in the United States that the most debasing lie-worship prevails among the representatives of public opinion. The heroes of the Revolution are habitually besmeared with praise beyond measure ; but one of those most influential in bringing on that Revolution, is never mentioned in the Fourth of July harangues ;—and the reason is that he, Thomas Paine, dared to be an enemy of the Bible ! That fact has obliterated the account of his great services. The American authors and editors are extremely fond of boasting of the little literary ability which has come to light in this continent ; yet who would ever discover from American books, or newspapers, that Palfrey, or Norton had written on religious subjects ? But they must not be spoken of, for their writings are not orthodox ; and it matters not that their books are among the ablest and most learned of the age. This is the policy of the secular as well as the religious press. The sin is not that of the editors, who, as a class, are "infidel" enough, but of the people generally, who, though they are not free from scepticism, yet think that the sham of religion must be kept up. If an author, or editor dare to speak like a man, the howl of "infidelity," and "atheism" is raised at once. To have an "infidel" book is a sin ; to be known to believe in its doctrines, is a serious offense, about which neighbors worry themselves with lamentations ; to declare that belief is to become an object for avoidance and obloquy, a public enemy, against whom every one may wag his tongue with impunity. Though among the great mass, there are some Protestants who excuse free inquiry, yet there has not been one prominent man, who has given the weight of his influence in its favor, and all the official authorities are strongly opposed to it. Thus it is that the two ablest religious periodicals of the day, the *North British Review*, representing the Scotch Church, and the

Christian Observer, the chief organ of the English Hierarchy, have gone so far as to discourage the publication of any new works on the evidences for Christianity. The former (May, 1854,) says, that it is a great evil of such books that the authors "repeat, and give currency to the *fallacious* arguments which they wish to expose"! And the latter (Aug., 1852,) thinks that a very "strong objection to any distinct comment on the infidel works of the day" is, that "it gives greater currency to that which might at once sink into the obscurity it deserves"! There is a woful condition of affairs; the greater the efforts which the Christians make to convert the skeptics, the more ground they lose. Alas! And has the great Christian Church come to this, that its only hope of continued existence is in keeping its members ignorant of what is said on the other side? It has come to that, alas! None but the prejudice-blinded are safe, if they come within the range of the serpent's eye. "No young or unformed mind," says the *Christian Observer* very truly, (July, 1852,) "can study the exegetical writings of modern Germany without the most serious risk of making shipwreck of his faith forever. The brilliant sophistries of Baur, the imposing candor of De Wette, the rapid and synoptical comments of Meyer, the emotional and fantastic piety of Schleiermacher, the masterly historic touch of Hase, are just those attractive elements which enter into combination most readily with the tendencies of eager, but undisciplined minds." There was no necessity that the *Christian Observer* should confine its remarks to "exegetical writings;" it might have said at once, and with perfect truth and propriety, that no clear, unprejudiced mind, seeking truth for its own sake, would be likely to have much faith in the Bible, after reading Hume, Gibbon, Paine, Voltaire, Bentham, Hennell, Strauss, Greg, or many others who might be named. No wonder then that the Christians do not love free inquiry, since it would and will certainly lead to the annihilation of their church.

If the reader have any doubt as to the propriety of questioning the truth of the Bible, let him consider that the prohibition of free inquiry bears fraud on its face—that the only proper test for truth in religion is reason,—and that belief in untruth after a fair investigation is better than adherence to truth before.

§ 2. *The prohibition of free inquiry bears fraud upon its face.* It is just such a trick as might reasonably be resorted to, to protect a false religion. What a grand scheme—to bring up a whole nation in an undoubting faith in, and a boundless fear of, a confederated set of priests, whom it supports in luxury and power, and whose authority dare never be questioned! The prohibition of free inquiry has been used to protect many fraudulent creeds. Every nation of men has its priests, who live by their creed, live well by it, are supported in luxury and high consideration by it, and who consequently are highly interested in its support. Their profession gives them a peculiar influence over the people, and in many states they have been almost omnipotent, politically. Their words were received with superstitious awe, and they could entertain a hope that a prohibition of free inquiry would be successful. There were such bodies of professional priests in ancient Egypt, in Babylon, in Persia, in Gaul, in Phœnicia, in Judea, in Etruria, and in Greece. There are such priests now in Japan, in Hindostan, in Thibet, in Arabia, in Russia, in France, in England, and in Utah, and among many other civilized and barbarous nations. The several classes of priests of no two of the lands specially mentioned above, taught or teach the same creed. There have been at least two hundred different religious creeds taught and extensively received among men, different from, and inconsistent with, each other, and all necessarily false, except perhaps one. These creeds were not only false, but their priests knew them to be false. Cicero said he did not know how two Roman augurs (priests) could meet without laughing at each other. Many of the Boodhist priests in China have confessed to Protestant missionaries that their creed is false, but they could not say so publicly, for if they did, they would lose their means of support. The Catholic priests in Spain laughed at their brother Blanco White, when he confessed to them with great seriousness that he doubted the inspiration of the Bible. *They* had got beyond that long before. A large number of the Catholic clergy in France publicly declared during the great revolution that their creed was a fraud. It is no secret that there is much skepticism among the Protestant clergy of the United States. And yet all these

separate sets of priests make the same claim, that *their* creed is the word of God, and is exempt from examination by reason. "To ask for nothing but results, to decline the labor of verification, to be satisfied with a ready-made stock of established positive arguments as proof, and to decry the doubter or negative reasoner, who starts new difficulties, as a common enemy,—this is a proceeding sufficiently common in ancient as well as in modern times. But it is nevertheless an abnegation of the dignity and even of the functions of speculative philosophy."* The same prohibition of doubt and free inquiry prevails now among the Bramins, the Boodhists, and the Mohammedans; and that prohibition which is thus made to serve as a protection for the four principal creeds on the earth, each accepted by more than a hundred millions of men, and each inconsistent with all the others—that prohibition bears fraud upon its face. Truth wears no defensive armor, shuns no enemy, and fears no fight: her only and constant prayer is for light and for a chance at the foe.

The only proper test for truth in religion is reason. Reason is the word of God, given to man for his guidance. Without it he has no guide: the revelation which does not appeal to his reason and agree to its demands is no revelation. "In entering upon any scientific pursuit, [or philosophic investigation,] one of the student's first endeavors ought to be to prepare his mind for the reception of truth, by dismissing, or at least loosening his hold on all such crude and hastily adopted notions respecting all the objects and relations, he is about to examine, as may tend to embarrass or mislead him: and to strengthen himself by something of an effort and a resolve for the unprejudiced admission of any conclusion which shall appear to be supported by careful observation and logical argument, even should it prove adverse to notions he may have previously formed for himself, or taken up without examination on the credit of others. Such an effort is in fact, a commencement of that intellectual discipline which forms one of the most important ends of all science. It is the first movement of approach toward that state of mental purity, which alone can fit us for a full and steady perception of moral

* GROTE. History of Greece.

beauty, as well as physical adaptation. It is the euphrasy and rue with which we must purge our sight before we can receive and contemplate, as they are, the lineaments of truth and nature."* "The strict rule of scientific, [and philosophic,] scrutiny exacts according to modern philosophers in matters of inductive, [and speculative,] reasoning an exclusive homage. It requires that we should close our eyes against all presumptive and extrinsic evidence, and abstract our minds from all considerations, [such as traditional authority and prejudices of education,] not derived from the matters of fact which bear directly on the matter in question. The maxim we have to follow in such controversies is *fiat justitia, ruat cælum* [let us know the truth, though it send us to hell.] In fact what is actually true is almost most desirable to know, whatever consequences may arise from its admission."† If the Bible was first adopted without reason, then it should be examined by reason now, to prevent the continuance of error; if it was investigated by reason in the beginning, then we should have the same privilege which our forefathers had. There is no probability that truth will lose ground by free discussion and submission to reason as the supreme tribunal: and he who expresses fears that it will, betrays at once his belief that his cause is bad. A revelation can be no revelation until it is understood, and no book-revelation now in existence can be understood, except by the exercise of reason. Anything claiming to be a revelation appeals by its very nature to our understanding, authorizes it to be bold and self-reliant, and promises in advance to submit to the decision.

It is not only the right but it is the duty of every man to examine the evidences on both sides of a question before adopting a firm belief on either side. On any other principle there will never be any progress in arriving at truth. Doubt is the beginning of philosophy—its mother and constant companion. He who believes what is told him on the mere say-so of others is always reckoned a fool. It may be very well for a child, entirely lacking in judgment, to receive as true everything told to it, but something different is expected from men of mature years. They should

* HERSCHKE. Introduction to Astronomy.

† PRITCHARD. Natural History of Man, Sec. II.

not only accept no doctrines without investigation, and reject all proved to be untrue, but they should also reject all not proved to be true. "It is not simply to arrive at a conclusion by a certain measure of plausible premise—and then to proclaim it as an authoritative dogma, silencing or disparaging all objections—that philosophic speculation should aspire. To unmask not only positive falsehood, but even affirmation without evidence, exaggerated confidence in what only doubtful, and show of knowledge without the reality ; to look at a problem on all sides and set forth all the difficulties attending its solution, to take account of deductions from the affirmative evidence, even in the case of conclusions accepted as true upon the balance—all this will be found pervading the march of every great thinker. As a condition of all progressive philosophy it is not less essential that the grounds of negation should be fully exposed than the grounds of affirmation."* In matters of religion it is peculiarly the duty of every man of intelligence to investigate, and demand conclusive evidence before believing. The subject is every day before him ; it is frequently under public discussion ; information upon it may be obtained with comparative ease ; and the matter may be said to be within the comprehension of every one—at least, every one must form some opinion upon it. The decision is one of high importance ; for upon it may depend much of a man's mode of thought, theory of duty, and course of life. We know that religious opinions at this day render a large majority of the human race subject to debasing superstitions, to illiberal prejudices to false theories and improper practices in morals, and to mental darkness generally. It is not only so to-day, but it always has been so. It was so in ancient Egypt, Babylon, and Gaul ; it is so in modern Hindostan, in Ceylon, in Spain, in Turkey, and in many other countries which it is not necessary to name. A large proportion of the wars, the despotic governments, the illiberal laws, the inquisitorial persecutions of good and wise men, and the opposition to beneficent reforms which have cursed the earth is chargeable to the self-styled ministers of God. We not only know that the creeds have been false, and that they have been productive

* GROTE. History of Greece. Slightly changed.

of almost unparalleled evils, but we know that they were conceived in fraud, and are still maintained by the grossest deception, over a large portion of the earth's surface. We not only know the fraud, but we comprehend the entire baseness of the motives at the bottom of it. History tells us that in ancient times the people were very ignorant and superstitious, and easily imposed upon, and the priests were numerous, and so influential that they could induce the people to believe or do almost anything. It was the common belief among the political rulers that government could not be firmly established, or morality preserved without the aid of superstition, the terror of the gods, and an implicit faith that the laws were of divine origin, and this belief frequently governed their action. Numa, Lycurgus, Zaleucus, Pythagoras and scores of other law-givers asserted that their codes were communicated to them by the Gods. Diodorus Siculus tells us that the purpose of these claims to divine origin for human laws, was to ensure the supremacy and permanence of constitutions, which would have been much less secure without the mighty protection of superstition. The laws of Egypt, Hindostan, Persia, and Babylon were all ostensibly dictated or written, word for word in Heaven. Strabo [50 B. C.] expressed the opinion common among the ancient Greeks and Romans, when he said: "It is impossible to conduct women and the gross multitude, and to render them holy, pious, and upright by the precepts of reason and philosophy: superstition, or the fear of the gods must be called in aid, the influence of which is founded on fictions and prodigies. For the thunder of Jupiter, the ægis of Minerva, the trident of Neptune, the torches and snakes of the furies, the ivy-adorned spears of the gods, and the whole ancient mythology are all fables, which the lawgivers who formed the political constitutions of states, employed as bugbears to overawe the credulous and simple." Robertson, after quoting the above in his History of India, adds—"These ideas of the philosophers of Europe were precisely the same which the Brahmins had adopted in India, and according to which they regulated their conduct with respect to the great body of the people. As their order had an exclusive right to read the sacred books, to cultivate and

teach science, they could more effectually prevent all who were not members of it, from acquiring any portion of information beyond what they were pleased to impart." Neither did such views expire with ancient times. They are still common even in the most enlightened countries, and men are to be met on all sides, who assert positively that whenever their respective forms of faith shall die, there will no longer be any security for peace, order, morality, and human happiness, and who would prohibit, under such penalties as should be effectual, any public denial of, or argument against, the main articles of their respective creeds.

The knowledge of this fact should serve as a warning to every man to carefully avoid the pit into which so many others have fallen. Let no one believe that "those times are past": human nature is the same, as it was three thousand years ago. The dangers which beset us, may come in a different shape, but they are substantially the same as those which caused the sufferings of men in early ages. With these facts, impressed upon our minds, every manly feeling, every sentiment of honor, devotion to truth, hatred of superstition, indignation at ecclesiastical frauds, opposition to intolerance, hostility to all kinds of tyranny, love of peace and desire for the general welfare of mankind—all combine to induce us, to use every reasonable exertion to avoid being duped into slavery to a false creed with the errors which must flow from it—all combine to induce us to distrust tradition as a reliable guide to religious truth—all combine to induce us, to receive nothing as of divine authority until it has been proved to be so by evidence at least as strong as that which a man must produce in court, before he can gain a lawsuit on a demand of five dollars for services rendered.

The Christians say, "The mysteries of a revelation are of a supernatural order; they rest upon the highest authority of God, who has revealed them to us, not for our comprehension, but for our belief, with all the humble submission which we owe to the infallible supreme being. From this it is clear that the tribunal of philosophy is incompetent to decide in matters of religion, which belongs only before the bar of revelation. Before a court, in its

nature so hostile as reason, revealed truths are endangered in advance. They are not made to stand the trial of philosophical disputations ; their greatness, their sublimity will not permit them to subject themselves to human criticism. Besides, it is against the nature of things that they should be victorious in such a struggle ; their essential character is to be subjects of faith, not of science. Theologians should not be ashamed to confess that they cannot enter into debate with philosophical doubters. The Christian who has allowed himself to be bothered by the objection of a skeptic, has already one foot in the grave of his fidelity. The ship of Christ is not made to be tossed about on the stormy sea of doubt, but to remain securely anchored in the harbor of faith.*" The Catholics tell us that we must provide for our eternal salvation as for our bodily health ; that as we employ physicians to devote all their attention to medicine and surgery, and then trust ourselves completely in their hands, so we should employ the church to manage for our eternal happiness. Religion, they say, is a matter, as abstruse as anatomy, physiology, chemistry and therapeutics, and it is quite as dangerous for a man, to attempt to make his own creed, as for him to try to set his own broken leg. The orthodox Protestants say, that the Catholic doctrine is wrong, because it necessarily leads to the preservation of all the abuses which collect about churches, as about all other old and prosperous corporations ; because, on that system, we must condemn all the beneficent reforms which have taken place in the church, and because it would reduce the whole world to slavery to the priesthood. But, say the Protestants, the Catholics are right in the idea that the people must trust the welfare of their souls with a physician, only they have not selected the right one ; they should place themselves not in the hands of the church, but of the Bible. The Scripture is a great receipt book, entitled, *Every man the Doctor of his own Salvation*, and it is the duty of all mankind, by taking the medicine therein prescribed, to heal themselves from the hereditary leprosy of original sin. It is the duty of reason, to discover that this receipt-book is infallible, and then to surrender itself completely to the reme-

*BAYLE. Dictionaire. Article sur le Pyrrhonisme.

dies prescribed, and though some of the medicines appear bitter and nauseating, yet to take them in full confidence that they are all for the best. This duty is sanctioned by the severest conceivable penalties. Both, Catholics and Protestants, leave reason free, to appreciate the merits of their respective living and dead doctors of salvation, but they do not give her freedom to discover and argue upon their faults. No Catholic must expose the corruptions of the church ; no Protestant must expose the weak points of the Bible. They really allow no freedom to reason, except that of signing a contract of absolute enslavement. Now, I demand, that before signing, she shall have full liberty to examine the proposed contract ; that while examining it, she shall not be terrified into imbecility by any threats of infinite pains, to be inflicted for an error of judgment in her determination, whether to sign or not ; that she shall remember, that although she is fallible, that yet she is the highest authority ; that there is no authority discoverable on earth, except that which comes from her equals, fallible like herself ; comprehending that, if she will but give her attention to the subject, she is as competent to form a sound opinion, as any other judge ; and seeing, that submission to any authority without examination, is necessarily degrading, superstitious, and suicidal in its nature. If after making a full and fair examination, she see fit to sign the contract, and to observe it, I shall make no objection, whatever.

§ 3. *Belief in untruth, after free inquiry is better than adherence to truth without free inquiry.* Human reason is fallible, and liable to error. No man can have any perfect assurance of possessing the perfect truth in religion. Many men have felt confident of such possession, but have been in error, as we know of a certainty ; and knowing the mistakes of other men in this matter, we should be careful in forming our opinions. That care implies, of course, thought ; thought implies doubt, and doubt demands investigation. An opinion scarcely deserves the name of "belief" if it has not been considered on both sides ; it is mere superstition. An English bishop has written very truly :

" He who has never doubted yet,
Has never yet believed."

We attach as a general rule the idea of high value only to those things which are rare or difficult of attainment ; but blind belief can make neither claim to high value. If there were any merit in belief, that merit should be measured by the amount of reasonable doubt and thorough investigation, and devotion to truth which led to the opinion. There is no other measure for merit in belief worthy the notice of a sensible man. Without doubt and investigation, no truth can be understood ; it remains a mere formula, and in no respect deserving to be considered as a proper intellectual possession, but rather a garment worn on the outside of the man. An idiot may believe sincerely that Jesus was the son of God, but surely that mere belief is no merit. A child may believe that the earth moves round the sun, but the mere repetition of such an opinion brings little blessing to his mind. It is the how and why, which does the good. "An opinion,* though ever so true and certain to one man, cannot be transferred into another as true and certain in any way, except by opening his understanding, and assisting him to so order his conceptions, that he may find the reasonableness of it within himself." "It is not instruction, but provocation," says Emerson, "that I can receive from another soul. What he announces, I must find true in me or wholly reject ; and on his word, or as his second, be he who he may, I can accept nothing." "The intellectual worth† and dignity of man are measured, not by the truth which he possesses, or fancies that he possesses, but by the sincere and honest pains he has taken to discover truth. This it is that invigorates his mind ; and by exercising the mental springs, preserves them in full activity. Possession makes us quiet, indolent, proud. If the Deity held in his right hand all truth, and in his left only the ever active impulse, the fond desire, and longing after truth, coupled with the condition of constancy erring, and should offer me the choice, I should humbly turn towards the left, and say 'Father give me this ; pure truth is fit for thee alone.' " If the result of belief is to be a paralysis of doubt and speculation, then is the consummation of knowledge the

* WOLLASTON.

† LESSING.

condition of intellectual barbarism. "Plato * has profoundly defined man 'the hunter of truth,' for in this chase as in others, the pursuit is all in all, the success comparatively nothing. In action is contained the existence, happiness, improvement and perfection of our being ; and knowledge is only precious, as it may afford a stimulus to the exercise of our powers, and the condition of their more complete activity. Speculative truth is therefore subordinate to speculation itself, and its value is directly measured by the quantity of energy which it occasions—immediately in its discovery—mediately through its consequences. Life to Endymion was not preferable to death. A waking error is better than the sleeping truth."

§ 4. "But," I shall be told, "this doctrine of free inquiry into all religious opinions will result in the rejection by a considerable portion of society, of the doctrines of a personal God who governs the universe, and of a future state of rewards and punishments. Now, these two doctrines are the foundation of all morality. Either you must abandon your free inquiry, or the hope of morality. The two can not exist together." And then my opponent appeals to history, and points to a number of special cases which prove, as he says, that faith in God and hell are the only trustworthy supports of public and private virtue.

I reply that "true religion † teaches no doctrines except such as are approved by pure, unassisted reason ;" and no man has a right to say that men are more likely to arrive at the truth without free use of reason than with it. If in any case, the doctrines arrived at by the friends of free inquiry, have been accompanied by immoral practices, then, I say, that the latter were not the necessary consequences of the former. Morality is not dependent on speculative religious opinions. "The ‡ distinction between moral good and moral evil, the obligation to avoid and cleave to that which is good, are laws as much acknowledged by man in his proper nature as the laws of logic, and which spring as much from a principle within him, as in his actual life they

* SIR WM. HAMILTON.

† KANT. *Brief an Fichte*. 2 Feb. 1792.

‡ GUIZOT. *History of Civilization*.

find their application." "Morality * is usually said to depend upon religion ; but this is said in that low sense, in which outward conduct is considered morality [: and it is not true even then]. In that higher sense in which morality denotes sentiment, it is more exactly true to say that religion depends on morality, and springs from it. Virtue is not the conformity of outward actions to a rule, nor is religion the fear of punishment, or the hope of reward. Virtue is the state of a just, prudent, benevolent, firm and temperate mind. Religion is the whole of these sentiments, which such a mind feels towards an infinitely good and perfect being. I am pleased with contemplations which trace piety to so pure and noble a source—which show good men have not been able to differ so much from each other as they imagined ; and that amidst all the deviations of the understanding, the beneficent necessity of their nature keeps alive the same sacred feelings". Conscience, the impulse to be just, and to love justice for its own sake, is an inborn part of every healthy human mind ; it is not plastered on by the priest. Every age, every nation has been blessed with men full of the spirit of love for their fellow-men ; and he who claims any peculiar and exclusive merit in this respect for Christians, subjects himself to the charge of either ignorance of the facts, illogical reasoning, or intentional dishonesty. "Socrates, † and Confucius, Plato, Cicero, and Zoroaster, agree unanimously in what constitutes clear understanding and just morals ; in spite of their various differences, they have all labored to one point on which our whole species rests. As the wanderer enjoys no greater delight than when he everywhere discovers, even unexpectedly, the traces of a thinking, feeling mind, like his own, so are we delighted, when in the history of our species, the echo of all ages and nations reverberates nothing but truth and benevolence towards man."

But if it be granted that free inquiry must be followed by great danger to morality, let us ask where our opponents would place the fence between skeptical investigation and blind adherence to tradition. How far is it proper to enslave the minds of the people ? Should speculative philoso-

* SIR JAMES MAKINTOSH.

† HERDER. *Philosophy of History*.

phy have been strangled, when Socrates led it as a child about the streets of Athens? Should natural science have been smothered in the cradle, when Anaxagoras had to flee from Attica, because he said that rain was caused, not by the immediate and not-to-be-examined will of Jupiter (the orthodox doctrine), but by the condensation of vapor in the air according to natural laws? Is it to be regretted that the priestly enemies of Abelard did not succeed in having him burned for saying that the only way to reach philosophy was by beginning with doubt? Ought we to lament the success of the Reformation with its platform of the "right of private judgment," provided it went no further than Luther led? Should we rejoice to think of the imprisonment of the grey-haired Galileo, for teaching doctrines at variance with those of the Church? Of course, the priests were right when they raised the howl of indignation at Descartes, when he taught that no doctrine should be received as pure truth until it has been tried over the hottest fire of reason in the crucible of skeptical examination? The Saxon censors were right, when they prohibited the circulation of Fichte's essay, denying the existence of a personal deity? The outcry against Lawrence was proper, when he demonstrated that the mind is the function of the brain? And we should regret that zealous theologians had not sufficient influence to stop, as they denounced, the researches and the teachings of the phrenologists, the geologists, the Egyptologists, and the mesmerists, who appeared to pay no regard whatever to the interests of orthodox religion? In short, where shall we stop thinking about things which may have an influence on our religious ideas? What possible point can be fixed between the most debasing superstition of the dark ages, and the most enlightened skepticism? I have a right to demand that my opponent shall be consistent with himself. Until he is, I shall condemn him out of his mouth. Does he admit that free inquiry—the spirit of insubordination to ecclesiastical authority—has done good in the past? If not, he stands self-condemned—an advocate of barbarism. If yes, then why should it not do good in the future? Where is the standard by which we are to learn where scientific and speculative thought must stop? How shall we distinguish between him who now denounces pantheistic, materialistic,

anti-christian and heretical authors, and endeavors to excite popular prejudices against them,—how shall we distinguish between him and the man who in former centuries raised his hands against Anaxagoras, Abelard, and Galileo. Both cried out, “religion is in danger ;” but we find that the cry was false, and instead of religion having been endangered by the philosophers, the world is fast coming to believe that it owes great obligations to them, and that those who were considered in their times among the worst, because the most influential enemies of the church, did it really the most good. The Protestants of the United States abuse the memory of Voltaire ; but they owe more to him for their religious opinions than they do to any Protestant who has lived within the last two hundred years. He did vastly more than any man of his own, or any later age, to annihilate those superstitions which prevailed and still prevail in the Catholic Church. “ Human * weakness has always confounded its representations of religion with religion itself, and predicted the fall of religion, if their own peculiar views were subjected to alteration. ‘ Religion is in danger,’ they cried at the time of the Waldenses, the Hussites, of Wickliffe, of Luther ; but it was only that form of religion, which bore the name of Catholic that was really in danger, not religion itself, which thus only gained a new form, beneficial to itself and to its influence, and bloomed forth in a new dress suitable to the times. Divine religion would indeed be a poor, paltry thing, if it depended for its existence on any form of human representation, which must always change as the time changes. Then long since would it have perished.”

Free inquiry is not the enemy of morality, but on the contrary its warmest and most powerful friend. We have no cause to imagine that after having furnished the chief mover of the progress which mankind has made in the last four hundred years, the spirit of scientific investigation and of philosophic doubt should now become a source of boundless evil. If we see the trouble and are unable to see how we shall escape from it, our only proper way is to go ahead with more speed. Time will provide a salve for the wounds which it inflicts. Experience tells us that though men have often adopted false opinions, yet that freedom of thought is the most certain protector of truth ; and that

* Westminster Review, Dec. 1815.

“speculative * philosophy, which to the superficial, appears so remote from the business of life, and the outward interests of men, is in reality, the thing on earth which most influences them.” The observer must be blind indeed, who does not perceive the vastness of the scale on which speculative principles, both right and wrong, have operated upon the present condition of mankind ; or who does not now feel and acknowledge now deeply the morals and the happiness of private life, as well as the reformation of political society and the general progress of the race are involved in the final issue of the contest between true and false philosophy. “Truth † in its own essence cannot be but good.” Philosophers agree in regarding it as inseparably allied to human happiness, to which error is essentially hostile. “It is ‡ utterly impossible to reckon the benefits which light confers upon the mind wherein it is allowed to enter.” “The || great interests of the human race, then, demand that the way of discovery should be open, that there should be no obstruction to inquiry, that every possible facility and encouragement should be afforded to efforts addressed to the detection of error, and to the attainment of truth—nay, that every human being as far as he is capable, should actively assist in the pursuit, and yet one of its greatest discouragements at present existing amongst mankind is the state of their own moral sentiments. Although he who has achieved the discovery of a truth in a matter of importance, or rescued an admitted truth from insignificance and neglect, may justly indulge the reflection that he has conferred a benefit on his fellow-men, to which even time itself can prescribe no limits, he will do well to prepare for the odium and persecution with which the benefit will be resisted, and console himself with a prospective reliance on the gratitude and sympathy of a future age. It is impossible to deny the fact that in some of the most important departments of knowledge [particularly those connected with Christianity] the bulk of mankind regard novelties of doctrine—a description under which all detections of error and acquisitions of truth must come,—as acts of moral turpitude or reprehensible arrogance, which they are ready to resent on the head of the promulgator.”

* JOHN MILL.—† BYRON. Cain.—‡ Vestiges of Creation.

|| SAMUEL BAILEY. On the Pursuit of Truth.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY ?

"A poor man in our day has many gods foisted on him, and big voices bid him—'worship or be damned.'"—CARLYLE.

§ 5. The fundamental dogma of Christianity, as the latter presents itself in this age, is that the Bible is the word of God—a divinely inspired revelation of the nature of man's moral and religious duties, and of the realities of the spiritual world. With that dogma the Bible must stand or fall. The purpose of this book is to show that the Bible is not divinely inspired, that it is a work of mere human origin, and that a considerable portion of it is false. I cannot in this place recapitulate all the doctrines, assertions or assumptions of the Bible, nor even those which I intend to deny and, if possible, prove untrue : but the main doctrines of the book, as generally understood, may be said to be that there is an omnipotent, personal, conscious Creator and Governor of the universe, named Jehovah ; that he created matter and all other existences out of nothing 6000 years ago ; that he then created one man and one woman from whom the whole human race is descended ; that these two parents of the race were, at first, sinless, perfectly happy and immortal, and were reduced to mortality and misery, and made subject to eternal pains after death, in punishment for eating an apple forbidden to them by Jehovah ; that 2000 years after the creation, the deity chose a man named Abram and his descendants to be his favorite people ; that 1900 years later, he sent Jesus Christ, a portion of himself, down to earth to teach religious truth and suffer death ; that Jesus, portion of the one and indivisible God, lived like a man for 33 years on earth, eighteen centuries and a half ago, and founded the Christian Church, and was crucified ; that his crucifixion atoned for the sins of Adam ; that all men, who believe him to have been a divine Redeemer as set forth in the Bible, shall enjoy ever-

lasting delights in heaven ; that all, who do not, shall suffer endless pains in Hell ; and that the Bible is a work written by divine inspiration, under the immediate supervision of Jehovah, for the express purpose of teaching religious truth to mankind. Christianity is properly the teaching of the Bible, taken as a whole—nothing more and nothing less. That “whole teaching” will be found on examination, to be a mass of almost innumerable and unparalleled incongruities : but they must still be taken together. Christianity must be held responsible for, and credited with, everything contained in the Bible. “Whatever we find there is a part of Christianity, whether recognized as such or not in after ages : whatever we do not find there is no part of Christianity, however early or however general may have been the attempts to interpolate it.”

We then take Christianity to mean every doctrine taught in the Bible and nothing more. But there is a great difference between the Christianity of the Scriptures, and that of many Christians, whose natural goodness, sense and intellectual cultivation are far superior to those of the gospel authors, and who interpret the Scriptures so as to explain away its objectionable features, and enable them to supply the good teachings which are wanting. If Christianity were understood to mean the rules of moral conduct which have served as guides to such men as Milton, Hume, Jefferson, Franklin, Channing, Milman and Arnold, then I for one abandon at once the idea of presenting any “evidences” against it : but it cannot be properly so interpreted, as will, I hope, appear very clearly in the course of this book.

§ 6. In examining whether the Bible be the Word of God, it is proper that we should consider some preliminary questions, such as whether there is an antecedent probability that a book-revelation would be given to man,—what that book-revelation, if given, might be expected to contain, and whether there are any peculiar difficulties in the examination of the subject ? Such questions are perfectly proper. “We* must suppose that if the Creator would communicate truth to his creatures, he gave them minds

* MORELL. Philosophy of Religion.

originally capable of sympathizing with it. In a word, the first revelation of God to man must have been an inward revelation." "When this revelation* [of philosophic reason] is clear and certain by intuition or necessary induction, no subsequent revelation supported by prophecies or miracles can supersede it." If a book-revelation should appeal to reason, and correspond to it, then we may properly ask the preliminary questions, above referred to.

Paley contends that there "is an antecedent probability that God would grant a direct revelation to teach man his duties and the moral nature of the universe, which are not clear by the light of natural religion ; and that it is consistent with the nature of a good deity that he should give some sanction to truth and justice among men, further than that discoverable to the unassisted human reason." I do not admit that antecedent probability. In the first place I deny the existence of such a personal Creator and Governor of the universe, as Paley assumes ; and in the next place I assert, that if such a divinity should exist, there would be no antecedent probability of a book-revelation. He gives man primarily faculties which teach religious ideas ; why should he resort to another method of teaching the same thing ? If it be said that the religion, discoverable by our natural faculties, is imperfect and insufficient for human wants, then I answer that it harmonizes, in that respect, with other parts of nature, none of which are made to secure the perfect happiness or wisdom of men or beasts. The grant of a revelation would imply an attempt to mend an article which does not serve its original purpose. If we assume the existence of a personal deity, we can judge of his character only by his works ; we must not argue that he must do so or so, because, if we were in his place, we should do so. If we argue in that style, we should believe that there is an antecedent probability that God would not create evil, or that he will put an end to it to-morrow. Now we all know by experience the absurdity of that kind of argument ; and therefore we must not use it in setting up an antecedent probability of an external revelation to supply those things in which man's internal organization is deficient. The man who

* JOHN ADAMS. Letter to Thomas Jefferson, Dec. 25, 18'3.

accepts Paley's anthropomorphism,* should believe that the deity ought to have made men with minds sufficient to discover by natural processes of thought all necessary truths in religion ; or that, if He should see fit to give an eternal revelation, it should not be enclosed in a book, accessible and intelligible to only a small portion of the human race, but written upon the face of nature, visible to every member of the human family, and in characters intelligible to all.

Admitting, however, the antecedent probability that a revelation would be given, is there another antecedent probability that the Bible is that revelation ? Freethinkers say there is not. God should not adopt the same means to teach true religion, which lying priests have used to teach false creeds. False gospels were in use long before the Bible was written ; why could not Jehovah find a new way of recording his doctrine ? Books are, so far as we know, the works of men ; the probability is, that the Bible is the same. There have been at different times and in different countries, not less than two hundred books received as the word of God, each inconsistent with all the others, and all false except, perhaps, one. On that score the antecedent probabilities are one hundred and ninety-nine to one against the Bible.

§ 7. What should be the characteristics of the antecedently-probable book-revelation, judging from other antecedent probabilities ? Alexander, in his *Evidences of* [for] *Christianity*, gives notice that if any such question is to be asked and answered in advance, he will confess judgment at once. " If reason be permitted proudly to assume the seat of judgment, and to decide what a revelation ought to contain in particular ; in what manner and with what degree of light it should be communicated : whether it should be made perfectly at once, or gradually unfolded ; and whether from the beginning it should be universal ; no doubt the result of our examination of the contents of the Bible, conducted on such principles, will prove unsatisfactory, and insuperable objections will occur at every step of the progress." Dr. Alexander appears to acknowledge that

* Belief in a deity who has the physical form and personality, consciousness, and mental qualities like man.

reason is against him ; but we know nothing of his " insuperable objections ;" we are here to find the truth ; and whatever the result of our examination, provided that it be conclusive, it cannot be " unsatisfactory."

Reason, " proudly assuming the seat of judgment," would probably demand that a book-revelation, before being accepted by man and made the guide of his conduct, should be proved to be of divine origin by conclusive affirmative evidence on each of the following points : That the revelation was written by an author known to us by name and character ; that the book was published by its author ; that it was then received and extensively circulated as a divine revelation ; that it has been preserved in purity as written ; that the doctrines taught, were original with the writer ; that the doctrines are true ; that they were undiscoverable by human reason ; that the doctrines are more powerful for good than any mere human teaching ; and that the revelation is written with superhuman ability, and contains all the information, in regard to religion and morality which was unknown at the time of its publication, undiscoverable by human reason and proper for man to know.

Various able and celebrated advocates of Christianity have commented at length on all these points, as connected with the Bible, and in each have pretended to find strong evidence of the truth of their faith ; and therefore it can hardly be considered unfair to consider them here as essential points. I have said that conclusive evidence on each of these points should be necessary to prove that the Bible is a divine revelation. The burden of proof rests properly upon Christianity : for it is a dictate of the plainest common sense that in religion, as in science and intellectual philosophy, every system should depend on the strength of the evidences in its favor, rather than upon the weakness of the testimony against it. The fact that the Bible is in common acceptance, and that its enemies are and have long been the assailants, does not give its advocates the right to shift the burden of proof upon the other side ; for Christianity, though it may be the established form of faith as regards society in general, is not established in reference to the man who is about to examine, whether it be

true or not ; and such is the position of every man who takes up this book, with intent to give it a fair hearing. However, these remarks about the burden of proof are only intended to fasten the attention of the reader more closely upon the nature of the question. I claim to be able to furnish proof, conclusive, abundant, overwhelming, that Christianity is not of superhuman origin, and to obtain strong if not unanswerable evidence for the negative upon each of the cited points.

There are several other points which it is antecedently probable, should characterize a book-revelation, but upon which the apologists of the Bible are careful to lay no stress. These points are that the revelation should be perfectly true, in all its parts, and perfectly clear in its meaning.

That a revelation should be perfectly true in all its parts, if given, is a doctrine which scarcely requires argument. If God were to write a book to teach truths undiscoverable by man's natural faculties, He would certainly write nothing but the truth ; and He would not commit errors of the same kind with those which He intended to correct. In the desire to tell religious truth, He would not be guilty of scientific, historic or moral falsehood. He would not contradict himself, so that one of the contradictory statements must necessarily be false. In short, His book should be infallibly true in every respect. It is not to be supposed that He would endeavor to supply a great want of humanity, and then supply the want imperfectly. If He should employ men to write His truths, He would see that the writing should be well done,—done so that the object in view should be attained—done in an unobjectionable, and, so far human eyes might discover, a perfect manner. To secure such perfection, He should see that the language expressed the idea fully, and to obtain such security He would naturally inspire His prophets with the very words to be used. And such inspiration is claimed by the writers of the Bible. Moses says, "God spake all these words" (*Ex. XX. 1*), and "The Lord said unto Moses 'Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel'" (*Ex. XX. 22*). After having written the words of Jehovah, the Hebrew lawgiver, still acting under inspiration calls

down curses on "every man that confirmeth not all the words of this covenant to do them" (*Deut. XXVII. 26*). Jesus repeatedly recognised the divine authority of the Old Testament, said that not one jot or tittle of the law should pass away, said that everything written "in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the Psalms" concerning him, should be fulfilled, and styled the Pentateuch "The Word of God" (*Mark. VII. 13*). He never hinted that the words were of mere human authority. When he sent out his twelve apostles, he foretold that they should be arrested, and he said, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak" (*Mat. X. 19*). This evidently means that Jehovah would inspire them with the very words, and surely the inspiration of a gospel would not be less complete than that for a legal pleading. Paul said that Jehovah "spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets" (*Ileb. I. 1.*), and again that "holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (*2 Eph. I. 21.*). So also (*Acts IV. 25*) it is said that "God spoke by the mouth of David." In no place do the writers of the Bible give a precise definition of the extent of their claimed inspiration, and the inference to be drawn is, that they acknowledged no limit short of infallibility.

The Christians claim that the Bible is infallible in all important points of doctrine, and such a claim presupposes that there is nothing of human imperfection about the book. If the inspiration be not plenary,—if we admit that there are little errors in it—how can we assert that there are no large ones? When we admit that it is full of human imperfections, we must advise every one to beware that he is not deceived by them. For fifteen centuries after the death of Jesus, the Jewish and Christian churches supposed their sacred scriptures to have been written under a perfect inspiration; and they supposed that this inspiration extended to all transcribers and translators. Thus, when Justin Martyr declared that the seventy-two scribes who translated the Old Testament in Egypt, had been enclosed in separate cells, and without communication with each other, had produced seventy-two complete translations, which were found to agree with each other throughout to the smallest

dot, his statement found universal credit : and his assertion that he had seen the cells (four hundred years after the making of the translation) was considered abundant proof of a proposition which was so very probable in itself. It was supposed in those days, that if God would give a revelation of his will to the men of one generation, he would take care that it should not be corrupted so as to deprive other generations of equal benefits from it. Such opinions continued until after the Reformation. That great revolution was in fact a declaration that the "Bible" must be worshipped, instead of the "Church" which was the idol of Catholicism. But the tide of opinion would not stop with Luther ; it continued to rise, and soon plenary inspiration was in danger. The orthodox churches continued however, to assert the infallibility of their book-revelation until near the beginning of this century, when it was seen that the doctrine of plenary inspiration would certainly be overthrown, and then the Church began to abandon it, for fear of going over with it.

§ 8. Bishop Law (Bishop of Winchester, England, in 1822) in his work designed for the instruction of young clergymen, called *The Elements of Christian Theology*, lays down the doctrine upon this question thus : "When it is said that the Sacred Scriptures are divinely inspired, we are not to understand that God suggested every word or dictated every expression. From the different styles in which the books are written, and from the different manner in which the same events are related and predicted by different authors, it appears that the sacred penmen were permitted to write as their several tempers, understandings, and habits of life directed ; and that the knowledge communicated to them by inspiration on the subject of their writings, was applied in the same manner as any knowledge acquired by ordinary means. *Nor is it to be supposed that they were thus inspired in every fact which they related, or in every precept which they delivered.* They were left to the common use of their faculties, and did not, in every occasion, stand in need of supernatural communication ; but whenever, and as far as, divine assistance was necessary, it was always afforded !" Again he says : "Although it is evident, that the sacred historians *sometimes* [!] wrote under

the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it does not follow that they derived from revelation the knowledge of those things which might be collected from the common sources of human intelligence. It is sufficient to believe that by the general superintendence of the Holy Spirit, they were directed in the choice of their materials, enlightened to judge of the truth and importance of those accounts from which they borrowed their information, [and which he states afterwards, were accounts written by uninspired men] and prevented from recording *any material error*." He is here treating of the writers of the Old Testament ; of the writers of the New Testament, his sentiments are the same. He says, "If we believe that God sent Christ into the world to found a universal religion, and that, by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, he empowered the apostles to propagate the gospel, as stated in these books, we can not but believe that he would by his immediate interposition, enable those whom he appointed to record the gospel for the use of future ages, to write without the omission of any important truth, or the insertion of *any material error*." And these sentiments are generally received as orthodox—are quoted from Bishop Law, and recommended, though not expressly adopted, by the late Bishop Watson in his answer to Paine, and are laid down in numerous works as the true principles of scripture inspiration. What ideas the profoundly learned Bishop Marsh, one of the professors of Divinity at Cambridge, [England] entertains of the inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, is evident from his labored scheme to account for the composition of the three first gospels, as given with his translation of Michaelis' *Introduction to the New Testament*, in which he supposes a principal and a supplemental sketch of the Saviour's life, and discourses to have been first drawn up by unknown authors,—to have had various additions made to them as they passed through various unknown hands,—and at last have been digested by Matthew, Mark and Luke, with further additions into the form of their respective gospels. Bishop Lowth, well known for his *Prelections on Hebrew Poetry and Version of Isaiah*, represents the prophets as borrowing ideas from one another, and improving or debasing what they thus borrowed, according to the sublimity

of their poetical genins, and the purity of their critical taste—and in so doing does he not degrade them in a great degree from prophets to mere poets? He certainly endeavours to elevate our esteem for their talents as men; but he assists in abolishing our reverence for their writings as flowing from the immediate dictate of God. Bishop Hinds of Norwich says, “It is not therefore truths of all kinds that the Bible is inspired to teach, but only such truth as tends to religious edification; and the Bible is consequently infallible as far as regards this, and this alone.” That is to say, all the remarks in the Bible about history, the creation of the world, science and morality as independent of religion, may be entirely false. And Bishop Hampden of Hereford expresses himself in a similar manner: “Christianity in fact leaves ethical science precisely where it found it; all the duties which ethical science prescribes, remain on their own footing, not altered or weakened, but affirmed and strengthened by the association of religion. And so independent is the science of ethics of the support and ennobling which it receives from religion, that it would be nothing strange or objectionable in a revelation, were we to find embodied in its language much of the false ethical philosophy which systems may have established.” That means that we must not anticipate as a certainty, that God would throw any light on the truths of morality, much less on those of science, in a book-revelation. And Archbishop Whately lends his countenance to these doctrines: “In matters unconnected indeed with religion, such as points of history or natural philosophy, a writer who professes (as the apostles do) to be communicating a divine revelation, imparted to him through the means of miracles, may be as liable to error as other men, without any disparagement to his pretensions; but if we reject as false *any part* of the *religion* which he professes himself divinely sent to teach, we cannot but believe that his pretensions are either an imposture or a delusion, and that he is wholly unworthy of belief.” Bishop Kitto’s *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature* in the article on “David” contains the following passage. “In the celebrated numbering of the people by Josh. 28 XXIV. 9 there are 800,000 warriors in Israel, and 500,000 in Judah alone: or according to 1 Chron. 11

XXI. 5, in Israel 1,100,000, and in Judah 470,000. The two results in *Kings* and in *Chronicles* are here inconsistent ; in both also we see the marks of a later narrator, who is accustomed to use the words Israel and Judah to mean *the ten* and *the two* tribes [as they were divided about half a century after the death of David.]” Such are the opinions common among the leaders of the English hierarchy—that body which is the most conservative and slow-motined of all the Protestant Church. The opinions of a multitude of other clergymen, reputed to be orthodox, and occupying less prominent positions, might easily be adduced, but a mere mention of the names of Coleridge, Morell, Maurice, Kingsley, Arnold and Macnaught must suffice with the following from Neander : “ It must be regarded as one of the greatest boons which the purifying process of protestant Theology in Germany has conferred on the faith, as well as science, that the old mechanical view of inspiration, has been so generally abandoned. That doctrine, and the forced harmonies to which it led, demanded a clerk-like accuracy in the evangelical accounts, and could not admit of even the slightest contradiction in them.”

Some of the orthodox, however, object greatly to these opinions. For instance the Rev. Mr. Noble* asks : “ Now, how do the freethinkers receive these concessions, so liberally made ? The advocates of revelation may be regarded as saying to them ‘ See ! we have come half way to meet you ; surely you will not obstinately refuse belief, now, that we require you to believe so little.’ What does the freethinker answer ? He says ‘ You are admitting, as fast as you can, that we are in the right. If you, who view the subject through the prejudices of your profession, are constrained to give up half of what we demand, unbiassed persons will augur from the admission, that truth would require a surrender of the whole.’ No, my friends and brethren !” exclaims the reverend gentleman, “ he who would effectually defend the Christian faith must take his stand on higher ground than this. What ! tell the world that to escape the increasing influence of infidelity, they must surrender the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures ! As well might we tell them that to obtain security when a flood is

* On the Plenary Inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures.

rising, they should quit the top of a mountain to take refuge in a cave at its base.

“ Assuredly, this is a state of things calculated to fill the breast of the sincere and humble Christian with profound concern, if not with deep alarm. On the one hand, he beholds divine revelation assaulted with unprecedented fury and subtlety by those who avow themselves as its enemies ; on the other he sees it half betrayed and deserted by those who regard themselves as its friends. Every devout believer in revelation feels an inward predilection for the opinion that the inspiration of a divinely communicated writing must be plenary and absolute. He feels great pain on being told that this is a mistaken notion ; that he must surrender many things, in the sacred writing, to the enemy, to retain any chance of preserving the rest ; that he must believe the writers of the Scriptures to have been men liable to error, as a preliminary to his assurance that the religion of the Scriptures is true. Surely, every one whose heart does not take part with the assailant of his faith, must be glad to be relieved from the necessity of making surrenders so fatal. The bowed staff eagerly springs back to its natural straightness, when lightened of the weight under which it bent,—so he who has relinquished the doctrine of plenary inspiration, only because he saw no other way of accounting for the difficulties which have been pointed out in the sacred writings, will return to it with joy as soon as he sees how those difficulties may be explained without the hypothesis of error in the inspired penman.” I object to the abandonment of the theory of plenary inspiration no less than does Mr. Noble ; such an abandonment is evidently an evasion—a mere shift to escape responsibility,—a device of a person who sees himself lost in open and fair encounter, and feels forced to resort to every pitiful dodge by which he may hope to prolong a sneaking existence. Under this theory the Christian can listen complacently, while the freethinker proves that no such man as Moses ever existed ; that the Pentateuch was patched together after the reign of David ; that the Mosaic cosmogony is absurdly false from beginning to end ; that the story of the flood contains a multitude of physical impossibilities ; that the morality of both the Old and the New Testament, is

decidedly bad, and that the whole Bible is full of contradictions and defects of composition,—to all this the Christian who rejects plenary inspiration, can listen complacently, and at last answer : “ Well, what of it ? Those fellows, that wrote the Bible, were men like you and me, and it is none of my business, if they did lie and make mistakes occasionally in matters not connected with religion. You can’t prove the doctrine of the Trinity to be false, and until you can do that, it is of no use for you to argue at me ! ”

A revelation should be perfectly clear in its meaning, and the language should be interpreted according to the ordinary meaning of the words. No figurative meaning should be understood, unless words were evidently used in a figurative sense, and could not have been intended to be taken literally. In plain historical passages no meaning should be found except the plain historical signification ; and in poetical passages, the figures should not be interpreted to mean more than they would mean in similar poetry, making no claim to inspiration. In no case should passages be interpreted as having two significations, for that would imply that they have no sense at all. The Christians, however, seeing the difficulties into which they are brought by the plain rules of common sense interpretation, object to them. They say that a passage, which taken literally, is absurd or evidently untrue, should be interpreted so as to appear reasonable and true. Such rules are adopted in interpreting human laws which, as all know, are frequently very defective on account of the ignorance, carelessness, or mental weakness of their compilers. But how shall we justify the application of these rules to the interpretation of a book which claims to be of divine origin, to have come from an author free from the ignorance, carelessness, and mental weakness of human lawgivers ? A genuine revelation needs no such protection ; false ones might be and have been screened by it from exposure. Kant remarks that “ the moral philosophers of Greece and Rome explained the grossest legends of their polytheism as the mere symbolical representation of the attributes of the one divine being, and gave a mystical sense to the many vicious actions of their Gods, and to the wildest dreams of their poets, in order to bring the popular faith, which it was not expedient to des-

troy, into agreement with the doctrines of morality. The Mohammedans gave a spiritual meaning to the sensual descriptions of their paradise, and thus the Hindoos, or at least the more enlightened part of them, interpreted their Vedas." If we were arguing against the divine authority of the Koran, or any other pretended revelation, we should object to such rules of interpretation as would deny the plain meaning of all the untrue and objectionable passages ; and so we must do with the Bible. If the advocates of forged gospels are permitted to hide behind the screens of partial inspiration and figurative language, and are justified by the public in such hiding, then their entire expulsion from the fields of philosophy must become a matter of exceeding difficulty ; but if they will stand up and fight fairly on the ground of plenary inspiration, and plain interpretation, they shall at least have the glory of honorable death. " Some, indeed, there are," says Jenyns, " who by perverting the established signification of words (which they call explaining,) have ventured to expunge important doctrines out of the Scriptures for no other cause than that their weak reason rebels against the mysterious truths of revelation, and they argue thus : 'The Scriptures are the word of God ; in this word no propositions contrary to reason can have a place. These propositions are contradictory to reason, and therefore they are not there'. But if these bold assertors would claim any regard, they should reverse their argument, and say : 'These doctrines make a part and a material part of the Scriptures ; they are contradictory to reason ; no proposition contradictory to reason, can be a part of the word of God, and therefore neither the Scriptures, nor the pretended revelations contained in them, can be derived from him' ".

§ 9. I shall endeavor to prove that the Gods and heroes of the Bible,—Jehovah, Jesus, Paul, the Prophets, Apostles, and the Jewish people,—were subject to a full share of human weakness and wickedness, and that they are not proper models for the practice of enlightened nations of this age ; that the Biblical doctrines of a personal devil, a material hell, immediate divine government, and the entrance of devils into the human body, are most gross and superstitious ; that the story of creation in Genesis is

false ; that the Scriptures are full of glaring discrepancies and inconsistencies ; that the morality of Jehovah and Jesus is bad ; that the Biblical doctrines are not original ; that Christianity is a source of evil, independently of its falsehood ; that the record of the so-called miracles and prophecies of the Bible prove the untruth of the book ; that the Biblical books were not written by their alleged authors ; and that the fundamental speculative doctrines of Christianity are false.

§ 10. Before commencing the argument, it may be proper for me to admit, in whole, or in part, such allegations of the Christians as have a bearing upon the question at issue, and which I do not intend to deny. I admit then that the Jews were enslaved in Egypt ; that they emigrated thence to Palestine about 1500 B. C. ; that their history from 1000 B. C., to 400 B. C., as recorded in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, is in the main correct ; that the Pentateuch was received by them as of divine authority as early as 500 B. C. ; that about 175 B. C., they received as inspired all the books of the Old Testament, substantially the same as we now have it ; that about the beginning of the common era a man, named Jesus, was born in Judea ; that he claimed to have a divine mission ; that he was executed by the Romans ; that persons claiming to be his followers, laid the foundation of the present Christian churches ; that the four first books of the New Testament, probably nearly the same as we have them now, were written by members of these churches, extensively circulated, and received as inspired as early as 150 A. D. ; that all the books of the present New Testament were received as inspired by Christian churches about 400 A. D. ; that the general outlines of Paul's history, as given in the New Testament are correct ; and that all the epistles ascribed to him, except that to the Hebrews, are genuine.

CHAPTER III.

JEHOVAH A BARBAROUS DIVINITY.

“ O thou, wha in the heavens dost dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best thyself,
Sends ane to heaven and ten to hell,
A' for thy glory
And na for ony gude or ill
They've done afore thee ! ”—BRUCE.

“ Every man's elevation is to be measured first and chiefly
by his conception of this great being. ”—CHANNING.

§ 11. Nearly all known nations or tribes of men believe in the existence of a divine person or persons, upon whom they bestow the qualities which form their ideal of perfection. To use the words of Schiller, “ Man paints himself in his gods.” Barbarous tribes have barbarous gods with gross material forms : and enlightened men have immaterial gods with high moral and intellectual attributes. Thirlwall in his *History of Greece*, speaking of the Grecian conception of Jupiter, the supreme divinity, says “ Even this greatest and most glorious of beings, as he is called, is subject like other gods to passion and frailty, for though secure from dissolution, though surpassingly beautiful and strong, and warmed with a purer blood than fills the veins of men, their heavenly frames are not insensible to pleasure and pain ; they need the refreshment of ambrosial food, and inhale a grateful savor from the sacrifices of their worshipers. Their other affections correspond to the grossness of their animal appetites. Capricious love and hatred, anger and jealousy, often disturb the calm of their bosoms : the peace of the Olympian state might be broken by factions and even by conspiracies formed against its chief. He himself cannot keep perfectly aloof from their quarrels ; he occasionally wavers in his purposes, is overreached by artifice, blinded by desire, and hurried by resentment into unseemly violence.” Such was the Olympian Jupiter, whose character is adduced by the Christians as proof in itself of the falsehood of the Greek mythology, and they point with triumph to the exalted Jehovah, as evidence of

the truth of their creed. Bishop Watson, in replying to Paine, said, "An *honest man*, sincere in his endeavors to search out truth, would examine first whether the Bible attributed to the Supreme Being any attributes repugnant to holiness, truth, justice, goodness—whether it represented him as subject to human infirmities." We shall then examine. The Hebrew Scriptures were published among a rude people, and, if of human origin, probably represent Jehovah as a coarse, rude being; but if those Scriptures were written by Jehovah himself, we shall find the divine nature represented as pure and perfect.

§ 12. *Jehovah is a biped.* According to Genesis (I. 26. 27) man was created in Jehovah's "image:" and since man is a biped, Jehovah must be the same. It was the common belief in ancient times that the gods have bodies like men, and if Moses had had a different opinion he would not only have said so in unequivocal language, but he would have carefully avoided any assertion that divinity and humanity are encased in similar "images." Jehovah not only has the biped organization but he also uses his organs as men do. He walked "in the garden in the cool of the day" (*Gen III* 8), selecting an agreeable time for a promenade. He "appeared" to Abraham, and took dinner with the patriarch, the meal being composed of veal, butter and milk. The two had a long conversation, which is preserved word for word. The mortal biped gave some very good advice to the immortal, who was about to "go down and see whether" Sodom and Gomorrah were so wicked as people said (*Gen XVIII*). So too he went "down" to confound the Babelites. He "spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (*Ex. XXXIII*. 11), and afterwards he was so gracious as to show to the law-giver his "back-parts" (*Ex. XXXIII*. 23), whereby the latter was no doubt highly edified. As becomes a great potentate Jehovah has reception days, when he welcomes angels who are employed in carrying his messages and attending to his business in places where he cannot attend in person. It was on such a day, "when the sons of God *came to present* themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them," that the conspiracy was formed between Heaven and Hell for the overthrow of Job (*Job. I*. 6). That Jeho-

valh has a voice is clearly implied by the numerous conversations which he held with Abraham, Moses and others : and we learn that his voice bears a great resemblance to that of man. Samuel, when he heard it, supposed that it was the voice of Eli (1. S. III. 8). The Almighty is not without mechanical skill, for it is written that "unto Adam also and unto his wife did the Lord God make coats of skin and clothed them" (*Gen III. 21*), and as the Father thus tried his hand at tailoring, so the Son subsequently became a carpenter (*Mark VI. 3*). After work, rest is required for Gods as well as men : and so "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth and on the seventh day he rested and was *refreshed*" (*Ex. XXXI. 17*). He dwelt only among his chosen people, never making himself manifest to the Heathens unless when fighting for his followers. Judea was his country, Jerusalem was his city, the Temple was his house, and the Ark was his throne. The Jews exclaimed "Oh thou God that *dwellest* between the cherubim" (*Psa. LXXX 1*), which were figures on the ark. Jesus said his Father was in "heaven," and when he was baptized, the Holy Ghost in the shape of a dove came down from the home of the Three : and the divine Jesus "is gone into heaven, and is on the *right hand* of God" (1. *Pet. III. 22*). So far as we can form an opinion from the language of Genesis, the authors of that book supposed man's mental constitution to have been originally different from that of Jehovah chiefly in the knowledge of good and evil ; and after that difference had been removed by eating the forbidden fruit, the creator remarked that the mortal had "become as one of us" (*Gen III. 22*). This doctrine that the Deity is similar to man in his material organization, physical form, and his mental constitution, is called **Anthropomorphism**.

Palfrey* speaks as follows of the narrative in the eighteenth chapter of Genesis : "Jehovah journeying like an opulent traveller with two attendants, approaches Abraham's tent in the heat of noon, and accepts his hospitable offers of water for his feet, and refreshment for his hunger. In recompense of this entertainment, he makes a promise to his attentive hosts of that blessing on which their hearts

* Lectures on Jewish Antiquities. Lec. XXIII.

are most set, while he rebukes Sarah for her incredulity, and the indecorous levity of its expression. The interview over, he proceeds on his way towards Sodom, and tells Abraham, who has respectfully accompanied him, that his purpose is to see whether tidings which have been brought to him of the iniquity of that place, are well founded. Like an obliged and grateful guest, he listens patiently, as they walk, to Abraham's solicitations for mercy for his neighbors. He sends his servants forward to make the scrutiny on which he is intent; and the truth of the unfavorable reports being ascertained by their experience, he proceeds to the accomplishment of his work of vengeance, sparing only the family in which his messengers had found safety and protection. What intelligent friend to the Divine Mission of Moses will be prepared to say that such views of God and of his agency as are presented in these particulars, were set down by him as just representations?"

§ 13. *Jehovah is represented in the Bible as cruel and bloodthirsty.*

The Lord hath sworn that he will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. *Gen. XVII. 16.*

He slew 500,000 men of Israel. *2 Ch. XIII. 15-17.*

He sent a pestilence to destroy 70,000 Israelites. *1 Ch. XXI. 15.*

He vexed Israel with all adversity. *2 Ch. XV. 6.*

He punished his true prophet for being innocently deceived, and permitted the deceiver to go unharmed. *1 K. XIII. 1-25.*

The Samaritan women with child should be ripped up. *Hosea XIII. 16.*

Jehovah destroyed 185,000 men in one night. *2 K. XIX 35.*

He slew 50,070 Bethshemites for innocently looking into the ark. *2 S. VI. 19.*

He smote Uzzah for piously putting up his hand to save the ark from falling. *2 S. VI. 6, 7.*

He inflicts punishment on the third and fourth generation. *Deut. V. 9;*

"The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel and he moved David against them to say, 'Go number Israel and Judah'". *2. S. XXIV. 1.* In accordance with

that instigation of Jehovah, David took a census of all the Jews. After he had done so, he came to the conclusion, for reasons not explained, that he had committed a great sin and prayed to the Lord for pardon (2. S. XXIV. 10). The latter however had determined to avail himself of the pretext to gratify his hate against his "peculiar people", and refused to be appeased. Nevertheless he was willing to give David a choice of evils, and sent word to him, saying, "Choose thee either three years famine, or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee, or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel". "And David said", "Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord". "So the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel; and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men" (1. Ch. XXI. 12-14). Here is a precious case of barbarity! Jehovah wants an excuse for gratifying his malice against a whole people, and he induces their monarch to do an act which was not evil in itself and which does not appear from the record in the Bible to have been undertaken with any bad motives or to have been executed in an evil or inefficient manner, and when the act is done, although the agent confesses his sin (where none existed), and prays for pardon, the Lord persists in taking vengeance by slaying seventy thousand persons, and inflicting great consequent misery upon their numerous relatives: and all this upon persons who had nothing to do with the alleged sin, which was no sin, and which, even if it had been sin, would properly have been chargeable only to Jehovah, its instigator.

"Israel joined himself to Baal-peor; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Take all the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, *that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel.*' And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, 'Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor.' And behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a

javelin in his hand ; And he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman, through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel." *Num. XXV. 3—13.*

Jehovah appeased by human sacrifice, not only stayed the plague, but he honored Phineas and his seed with everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and his deed was "counted to him for righteousness unto all generations of men forever more". *Ps. CVI. 31.*

"I [Jehovah] gave them [the Jews] also statutes that were not good and judgments whereby they should not live, and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that opened the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the Lord." *Ezek. XX. 25.*

Thus God "caused" the Jews to be guilty of offering human sacrifices !

"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts,' [to Saul, King of the Jews] 'I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt [400 years previously]. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not ; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. * * * And Saul smote the Amalekites. * * * But Saul and the people spared Agag [the king] and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs. * * * Then came the word of the Lord to Samuel saying, 'It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king ; for he is turned back from following me and hath not performed my commandments' [in saving Agag and the cattle]. * * * And Saul said unto Samuel * * * 'The people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the thing which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord, thy God in Gilgal. * * * I have sinned ; for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words ; because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. Now therefore I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me that I may worship the Lord.' And Samuel said unto Saul, 'I will not return with thee ; for thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.' * * * And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal." 1 S. XV. 2—33.

"And the Lord said, 'Who shall entice Ahab, King of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead ?' And one spake, saying after this manner, and another after that manner. Then came there out a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, 'I will

entice him.' And the Lord said unto him, 'Wherewith?' And he said, 'I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the Lord said, 'Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail; go out and do even so.'" 2 Ch. XVIII. 19—21.

The seventh chapter of the book of Joshua contains an interesting story of Achan. This individual was a soldier in the gang of robbers or fillibusters, with which Joshua conquered Jericho. Contrary to the orders of his leader, Achan kept some of the spoil of the city, for the prophet had ordered that not only all the men, women, and children in the city should be slaughtered, but that the property should be destroyed, and nothing kept as spoil. This was Jehovistic morality in early ages, and although we should consider such conduct highly barbarous now, perhaps it was very proper and humane then. Well! nobody noticed at the time that Achan took of the forbidden spoil; but not long afterwards, an army, sent by Joshua to treat the city of Ai to the same benevolence shown to Jericho, was defeated. Joshua was greatly afflicted at the news, and began to think that Jehovah was not so valuable a friend as he had once supposed. He lamented that his tribe had followed the directions of the Lord in entering Canaan, and exclaimed, "Alas! Oh Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us"? God Almighty replied, not without indignation: "Get thee up! Wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned", Achan actually took several pieces of jewelry and other trifles at the destruction of Jericho, and now has them in his possession. Now, therefore, let him "be burned with fire, he, and all that he hath"; and "neither will I be with you any more, unless ye destroy the accursed thing from among you". Thereupon, Achan, "and his sons, and daughters", (what business had they to be a sinner's children?) "were stoned with stones", and "burned with fire". This act of humanity and piety having been faithfully performed, "the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger", and to show that he was really propitiated, he directed Joshua to send another army against Ai, which he did, and the result was the destruction of Ai, and the massacre of all its inhabitants, who were "utterly destroyed".

" All the spoil of these cities [the capitals of five kingdoms hostile to the Hebrews] and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe. As the Lord commanded Moses, his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses. * * * * There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; all other they took in battle. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses ". *Joshua, XI. 14—20.*

While David reigned, a three-years' famine came upon the land of Israel, and oppressed the people sorely. The royal prophet, knowing that not a sparrow falls, except by the will of Jehovah, who rules the whole universe by the immediate exercise of his will, applied to the Lord to know why this famine had been inflicted upon the land. The Almighty replied, that it was because Saul had oppressed the Gibeonites, with whom the Israelites had entered into a treaty of friendship in the days of Joshua (*Josh. IX. 3. 16*). Saul's motive in this oppression was " zeal to the children of Israel and Judah " (*2. S. XXI. 2*). But the Lord was highly dissatisfied with that mode of showing zeal, and was determined to have revenge. Instead of taking it, however, upon Saul, or upon his people during the lifetime of that monarch, Jehovah waited until many years after his death, and then took vengeance, not upon the descendants, or friends of Saul, but upon the whole nation. David, being a prophet, understood that he should wash the hands of Israel free from this stain, and for that purpose he sent asking the Gibeonites, what atonement they would have for the injustice wrought upon them by Saul. They replied that they would be satisfied, if David should deliver to them seven of the sons of Saul to be hanged. David, without hesitation, complied by giving them two sons and five grandsons of Saul. These sons were the brothers of David's wife, Michal, and the five grand-sons of Saul were sons of Michal by another husband. Thus David gave up two brothers-in-law, and five step-sons to the hangman; but Jehovah appears to have been satisfied with the atonement, for after

the sacrifice he "was entreated for the land" (2 S. XXI. 14), and he put a stop to the famine.

The XXXIst chapter of Numbers contains an account of a war between Israel and Midian, commenced by the order of Jehovah, who ordered his chosen people to take vengeance on the heathen tribe. The Jewish army invaded the Midian territory, "slew all the males", "burned all their cities", and "took all the women of Midian captives with their little ones". No sooner had Moses learned that the army had spared the women, than he "was wroth with the officers of the host", and forthwith issued his orders as follows: "Kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women-children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves". Of women that had not known man by lying with him, there were thirty-two thousand, and of these "the Lord's tribute" was thirty-two persons. "Bishop Watson, in his *Apology for the Bible*, says: 'I see nothing in this proceeding but good policy, combined with mercy'! This remark is followed by some ill-advised declamation. The coarse writer (Paine), against whom he professes to argue, had said that the Midianitish virgins 'were consigned to debauchery by the order of Moses'. 'Prove this', says the Bishop, 'and I will allow that the Bible is what you call it, —a book of lies, and wickedness, and blasphemy'. The promised concession is equally liberal and injudicious. As a matter of fair statement, the word 'debauchery' is objectionable from its association with modern manners and sentiments. But if we receive the Pentateuch as true, the difference between the actual lot of the Midianitish virgins, and what it is represented to have been by the use of that word, is very narrow and unsafe ground on which to peril the whole credibility of revealed religion.

"It may be said, in defense of the Jews, that their conduct toward the Midianites was not more barbarous than that of other ancient nations in their wars with each other. This defense, if the massacre, according to the account, had not been perpetrated by the express order of Moses, is in opposition to the more humane purpose of the army and its leaders. As the case now stands, this apology implies the

proposition that Moses was commissioned by God to sanction and perpetuate the barbarism of his age".*

The following are instructions given by Jehovah to guide his "holy people" in conduct toward heathen nations.

"When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein, shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it. And when the Lord thy God, hath delivered it into thy hands, then thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. *But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city*, even all the spoils thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord, thy God, hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee which are not of the cities of these nations [the heathen occupants of the promised land]. But of the cities of these people, which the Lord, thy God, doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth." *Deut. XX. 10-16.*

The land which was to be treated in this style by a band of barbarians from the wilderness, under divine command,* was already highly civilized, with large cities "walled up to heaven," and the land was highly cultivated, "flowing with milk and honey." *Ex. III. 8. Num. XIII. 27, 28. Deut. VIII. 7-9, IX. 1.*

§ 14. I know of only one noteworthy attempt to justify Jehovah for such deeds of cold-blooded cruelty as are recorded of him in this section in selections from his own autobiography. Watson, in replying to the strictures of Paine upon the command for the destruction of all the males and married women of a heathen tribe, says: "You think it repugnant to his [God's] moral justice, that he should doom to destruction the crying or smiling infants of the Canaanites. Why do you not maintain it to be repugnant to his moral justice, that he should suffer crying or smiling infants to be swallowed up by an earthquake, drowned by an inundation, consumed by a fire, starved by a famine, or destroyed by a pestilence? The Word of God is in perfect harmony with his work; crying or smiling infants are subjected to death in both. We believe that the

* NORTON.

earth, at the express command of God opened her mouth, and swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with their wives, their sons, and their little ones. This you esteem so repugnant to God's moral justice, that you spurn as spurious, the book in which the circumstance is related. When Catania, Lima and Lisbon were severally destroyed by earthquakes, men, with their wives and their sons, and their little ones were swallowed up alive,—why do you not spurn as spurious the book of Nature in which this fact is certainly written ; and from the perusal of which you infer the moral justice of God ?” This argument implies that Jehovah is the author of evil, a doctrine which Christian philosophers do not assert. But if Jehovah be the author of evil, can he be worthy of worship ? Shall we adore in a God the same act which we punish in men with death ? When a man sets a ship on fire and causes the death of several hundred persons by burning and drowning, he is a horrible wretch, against whom all the world is in arms ; but if Jehovah strikes another ship with lightning, and burns it up, causing equal misery and loss of life, it is all right.

§ 15. *The Bible represents Jehovah as partial.* He selected the Jews to be his favorite nation ; he gave them laws and rulers, and cared for their welfare, while he was utterly careless for the fate of other nations.

“Thou [Israel] art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are on the face of the earth.” *Deut. VII. 6.*

“I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God.” *Ex. VI. 7.*

“Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation.” *Ex. XIX. 6.*

Jehovah hath chosen the Jews “for his inheritance.” *Psa. XXXIII. 12.*

“Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself ; thou shalt give it to the stranger that is in thy gates that he may eat it ; or thou mayst sell it unto an alien.” *Deut. XIV. 21.*

“Thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.” *Psa. LIX. 8.*

“I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance.” *Psa. II. 8.*

§ 16. *The Bible represents Jehovah as ignorant and weak.*

Jehovah tried to find out what was in Hezekiah's heart.
2 Ch. XXXII. 31.

He sent to have the length and breadth of Jerusalem measured with a tape. Zech. II. 2.

He went to Balaam for information. Num. XXII. 9.

He inquired for information. 2 Ch. XVIII. 19.

He could not conquer chariots with scythes. Jud. I. 19.

"And it came to pass by the way that the Lord met him [Moses] and sought to kill him" (Ex. IV. 24), but as it appears, did not succeed, for Moses lived forty years or more afterwards. I wonder whether it was a fair fight. Perhaps Moses took "a foul hold."

Some years after Jehovah had selected Abraham to be the father of the chosen people, and had notified him of the choice, and had repeatedly spoken to him about that and other matters, after Isaac was born in accordance with the divine promise and in violation of all the rules of probability, after the Divine Majesty had repeatedly appeared in person to the eyes of the great patriarch, after the memorable destruction of Sodom and many other striking exhibitions of divine power, the Lord was still in doubt whether Abraham really believed in Him; and, to satisfy Himself, He ordered Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham did not stop to parley as he had previously done with success in pleading for Sodom, but he prepared the altar, tied his son hand and foot, and raised the sacrificial knife to let out the blood of the intended victim, when the Lord, satisfied that Abraham was in earnest, revoked the order of the sacrifice, saying, "now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son" (Gen. XXII. 1-14). It is singular that God did not know it before.

"Thou shalt remember all the way, which the Lord thy God, led thee these forty years in the wilderness to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments." Deut. VIII. 2.

§ 17. *The Father of the Universe is depicted in the Hebrew Scriptures as changeable and frequently repentant.*

Jehovah wavered in his intention. Num. XXXIII. 55, 56.

He repented having make Saul king (1 S. XV. 10, 11, 35). He had previously given Saul another heart and promised to be with him. 1 S. X. 7, 9.

The Lord repented of the evil he was about to do to Jerusalem. 2 S. XXIV. 16.

He was grieved for the misery inflicted by himself on Israel. *Jud.* X. 16.

He repented of the evil he had done to Israel. 1 Ch. XXI. 14, 15.

He repented of the evil he was about to do to Israel. *Jer.* XXVI. 13.

“ And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.” *Gen.* VI. 6.

“ And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord and served him not. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon. And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years, all the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan, in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. Moreover, the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight also against Judah and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed. And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord saying, ‘ We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.’ And the Lord said unto the children of Israel, ‘ Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon and from the Philistines? The Zidonians also and the Amalekites and the Moabites did oppress you; and ye cried to me and I delivered you out of their hand. Yet ye have forsaken me and served other gods; wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods whom ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.’ And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, ‘ We have sinned; do thou unto us, whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee this day.’ And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.” *Jud.* X. 6-16. And the Lord raise up Jephthah who delivered them. *Jud.* XI. 29. 32.

Hezekiah was “ sick unto death”, and the Lord sent word to him, saying, “ Let thine house in order, for thou shalt die.” Hezekiah demurred saying, “ Remember Lord,

I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart." And Jehovah was turned from his purpose and sent word to Hezekiah, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears ; behold I will add unto thy days fifteen years." *Is. XXXVIII. 1—5.*

" And the Lord said, ' Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me : and if not, I will know ! And the men [Jehovah's angelic spies] turned their faces from thence and went toward Sodom ; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And Abraham drew near, and said, ' Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked ? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city ; wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein ? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked ; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee ; shall not the judge of all the earth do right ? ' And the Lord said, ' If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. ' And Abraham answered and said, ' Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes ; peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous ; wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five ? ' And He said, ' If I find forty and five, I will not destroy it. ' And he spoke to Him yet again and said, ' Peradventure there shall be forty found there. ' And He said, ' I will not do it for forty's sake. ' And he said unto Him, ' Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak ; peradventure there shall thirty be found there. ' And He said, ' I will not do it, if I find thirty there. ' And he said, ' Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord ; peradventure there shall be twenty found there. ' And He said, ' I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. ' And he said, ' Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once, peradventure ten shall be found there. ' And He said, ' I will not destroy it for ten's sake. ' And the Lord went His way as soon as he had left communing with Abraham ; and Abraham returned unto his place." *Gen. XVIII. 20—33.*

In old times Jehovah was much more sociable with men than he is now-a-days, as the above narrative may testify. He seems to have taken the advice and rebukes administered to him by the mortal biped in a very christian spirit. The preceding and the two succeeding extracts contain the records of the most remarkable confabs which he ever held with men.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘Go, get thee down: for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, these be thy Gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up, out of the land of Egypt’. And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: now, therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation’. And Moses besought the Lord, his God, and said ‘Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand’. Wherefore should the Egyptian speak and say, ‘For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth.’ Turn from thy fierce wrath and *repent of this evil* against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swearest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of, will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.” *Ex. XXXII. 7-14.*

Moses who was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt was a sage counsellor, and his superiority to Jehovah, who had probably had little intercourse with polite society, is evident from this story. Nevertheless it appears from the following narrative that the Lord did not profit much by the good advice of his Prime Minister.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘How long will this people provoke me? And how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have showed them? I will smite them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they’. And Moses said unto the Lord, ‘Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them); and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou, O Lord, art among this people, that thou Lord, art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them by day-time in a pillar of cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee, will speak saying, Behold the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness. And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, accord-

ing as thou hast spoken, saying The Lord is long-suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt, even until now'. And the Lord said 'I have pardoned according to thy word'. *Numbers XIV. 11-20.*

§ 18. Is the reader not satisfied that Jehovah was a barbarous divinity? Was he not a horrible divinity, suited to the ideas of a superstitious, semi-barbarous people, filled with presumption that they alone had favor with God, and rights among men? If a powerful, unscrupulous, tyrannical priesthood had desired to fill their followers with hatred and contempt for all foreigners, could they have devised a more efficient means for attaining their end, than that of establishing the worship of a deity with such a character as the Hebrew Jehovah? Reader, is he your God? Do you worship him? Do you believe the quotations, which I have made in this chapter from the Bible, to have been written originally at his dictation? Do you think the words and deeds, ascribed to him in those quotations, to be consistent with the attributes of perfect love, mercy, justice, and wisdom? Or if you reject such portions of the Bible, why not reject all of it? How can one portion of it be inspired, and another portion be not only uninspired, but written under the influence of baleful superstitions? If you deny the truth of Moses when he described himself as more wise and merciful than Jehovah, (as he does virtually in the last quotation made) how can you accept with full faith the story of Adam's fall, written by that same Moses? And if you reject the myth of the fall by Adam, how were you saved by Jesus? And how could Jesus have possessed more than human wisdom, when he recognized the immediate divine authority of Moses?

There are some passages (comparatively few in the Old Testament), which represent Jehovah as just, merciful and loving; but they are contradicted by those quoted, and by hundreds of others, and indeed by the general spirit of the law. The deity of the New Testament as compared with the Mosaic divinity, is a pattern of mildness and good manners in his ordinary conduct, but his barbarous

character is evident from his condemnation of all, who do not worship him, to infinite and eternal suffering in a lake of fire and brimstone. Paul says "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (*Heb. X. 31.*). He might have added "It is a fearful thing to fall into the jaws of a blood-thirsty and infuriated Tiger".

CHAPTER IV.

JESUS NOT A PERFECT MORAL HERO.

"You will next read the New Testament. It is the history of a personage called Jesus. Keep in your eye the opposite pretensions; *first*, of those who say he was begotten by God, born of a virgin, suspended and reversed the laws of nature at will, and ascended bodily into heaven; and *secondly*, of those who say he was a man of illegitimate birth, of a benevolent heart, enthusiastic mind, who set out without pretensions, ended in believing them, and was punished capitally for sedition, by being gibbeted according to the Roman law.—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

§ 19. The Bible represents Christ, the alleged Savior and great teacher of mankind, as a character with little title to our reverence or admiration. Although nominally a God, he was in every essential respect a man, and and as such he must be judged. If the Christian doctrines be true, Jesus, whether human or divine, is, in either case, the great teacher, the representative on earth of the Deity, and he should be our greatest and most admirable character—a hero in every true sense of the word—pure and great above all other men. This purity and greatness should be not only existent but also perceptible. Unless such qualities were exercised, they would be of no benefit; and if they were exercised the inspired writers of his life must have known, and should have made a record of their manifestations. The advocates of Christianity boast loudly of the pure and exalted character of their Redeemer, as

shown in the history of his life, and point to his words and deeds as greater taken together than the words and deeds of any other man ever were or ever can be—as in themselves conclusive evidence of his divine mission. Infidels, while denying all claims of the Bible to inspiration, and asserting that Jesus was a man like other men, have generally admitted that he was a very great and good man. Such men as Hennell, Franklin, Strauss, Rousseau, Gœthe, Voltaire, Paine, Wieland, Byron, Rammohun Roy, Emerson and Carlyle, have paid high tributes to his moral character, some of them saying that he never had an equal among men. Almost, if not entirely alone, in taking ground against such great authority, yet in justice to the subject, and to my own views, I must contend that an examination of the record will show that Jesus exhibited no high talent, or heroic character, but on the contrary will show that his doctrines were all borrowed, that his moral teachings were in many important particulars unsound and defective, that his conduct was frequently that of a weak and timorous man, that he often prevaricated in regard to his doctrine, that he adopted ancient superstitions, and that not Jesus, but Paul is the hero of the New Testament, the author of the books, the teacher of the doctrine and the founder of the Christian Churches now in existence.

§ 20. We must consider the overthrow of the exclusive rude, tyrannical and form-bound creed of Moses, and the establishment on its ruins of the mild, comparatively liberal and universal Christian religion as a blessing to humanity, more particularly since that religion, under the concurrence of a multitude of causes, has been adopted by a multitude of nations who were previously under the dominion of worse forms of faith. Jesus was undeniably the occasion of that reform, and while engaged in the labors which aided to bring it about, he was put to death. There is a true nobility in working for a good cause, with a clear comprehension of its goodness, and from pure motives ; there is a high heroism in the continuation of such work, when faithfulness to it is threatened with death ; and moral greatness rises nearly if not quite to its highest possible manifestation in the wise, enlightened and prudent man who unflinching faces and meets death rather than fail in what he considers

his duty to truth. Jesus was executed ; he was executed because his conduct or his doctrines were obnoxious to persons in power ; and we have no reason to question the purity of his motives. If his doctrines were enlightened and good, and if his death was caused by his persistence in teaching them, after he foresaw the danger of death, we cannot deny our warm admiration to him. High heroism requires, as I understand it, a large degree of both intellect and moral purpose. Great genius without goodness, and great goodness without perspicuous sense are both, to some extent, unadmirable. The good purposes, and the great devoutness of Jesus I admit, but I deny his claim to high heroism, because his mind was narrow, and many of his teachings false—as I hope to prove presently.

If it be plain that Jesus sought to overthrow the Jewish law, that he sought to establish upon its ruins, a permanent, universal and form-free religion,—if he foresaw and sought the development of Christianity as interpreted of late years by Channing, Palfrey, Arnold, Milman, Morell, Schleiermacher and hundreds of other good, great, and in every respect admirable men—or even if he foresaw and sought only the development of his religion as illustrated in the history of Christendom for the last eighteen centuries, then we can not for one moment deny his *heroic* merit. But what evidence is there that he had such foresight and purposes ? It is true that, according to the Evangelists, he used many expressions implying the overthrow of the Mosaic law, and the adoption in its place, of a universal faith. He said the “law was until John” the Baptist, thus giving his hearers to understand, that the old Jewish law was of no force subsequent to the preaching of John. He said that the man who should follow him, renounce pecuniary wealth and observe the ten commandments, would be perfectly righteous. He said that the whole law consisted in doing to others as we would have them do to ourselves. He declared “Not that which goeth into the mouth of a man defileth, but that which cometh out.” He made a practice of speaking with great disrespect of the Scribes and Pharisees—by whom he meant the Levites (the heirs of Jehovah’s ministry forever, according to the Mosaic law), and he said, a man could not enter the king-

dom of Heaven unless he were more righteous than they ; and he declared that no man born of woman, was greater than John the Baptist who styled the Levites “ a generation of vipers ” and paid no regard to the Mosaic ceremonial. Finally it is reported that Jesus, in his last charge to his disciples, directed them to preach the gospel to “ all nations.”

If we admit these statements to be true, we must also admit that Jesus intended to overthrow the Mosaic Law : but unless they be proved to be true, we have no reason to believe that he had any such intention. By examining the New Testament, we find them to be contradicted, in a great many passages—the contradiction being absolutely irreconcilable ; and the weight of the passages and inferences being entirely against the above statements. But we find that Jesus admitted the inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures ; he declared he had not come to destroy the law and the prophets, of which every jot and tittle should be fulfilled ; that he spoke approvingly of sacrifices (*Mat. V. 23*), and of fasting (*Mat. VI. 18*) ; that when accused of violating the Sabbath, he did not deny the sanctity of the day, but pleaded in justification that his actions had not violated its holiness ; that he spoke of Jerusalem as the Holy City, and the Temple as the House of his Father ; that he directed a cleansed leper to show himself to the priests, and “ offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them ” (*Mat. VIII. 4*) ; that he said the priests sat in “ Moses’ seat ” and *directed the people to obey them* (*Mat. XXIII. 3, 4.*) ; that when a Gentile woman addressed him, he repulsed her rudely, and said his mission was only to the Jews (*Mat. XV. 23*) ; that he ordered his apostles to preach to the children of Israel only (*Mat. X. 5, 6.*) ; that he never preached to the Gentiles, and had no Gentile among his apostles, and none among his disciples. Here are two classes of statements entirely irreconcilable, reported by the same authorities, and if considered by themselves, of equal probability. We must then look to the context, and the history of the Christian Gospel and Church, for additional light, and we shall find much testimony, going to show that Jesus was not an enemy of the ceremonial observances of the Mosaic law, but that he taught his followers to believe that sacrifices, circumcision,

and the blood of Abraham were absolutely necessary as passports to divine favor.

In the *first* place, we must remember that the early Christians were divided into two classes of the Jew and Gentile converts ; and that many of the Jewish Christians were "Judaizing" in their creed ; that is to say, they asserted that Jesus had not abrogated any portion of the Mosaic law, nor denied the superior merit of the blood of Abraham. The Gentile Christians said that the blood of Abraham had no preference before God, and that all the law of Moses, save the commandments was set aside. The New Testament was selected by councils composed entirely of the Gentile converts, and of course they would not be disposed to adopt a gospel denying their own admissibility into Heaven. There were early gospels current among the Judaizing sects, but they are now lost, and we do not know their contents. We have no record of the history of the early Christian churches in Jerusalem or Judea ; and, so far as we know, there is no church now existing, which derives its doctrines from them. Thus we derive all our information of the teaching and history of Jesus, from a sect which was engaged in a dispute in regard to the nature of his doctrines.

Secondly : " Jesus * faithfully observed the forms of the Jewish law " ; and when he was accused of violating it, he always justified himself by acknowledging its validity, but urging that his act was not in violation of it. Now, such conduct is entirely inconsistent with the supposition that he considered the ceremonial law to be a mere mummery. The earnest religious reformer, who seeks to establish a new faith, and believes the ceremonies of the old faith, which stands in his way, to be useless observances, will declare himself their bitter enemy ; for, indeed, he must wean the people from them, before he can make way for his new doctrine. He who directly or indirectly countenances a religious mummery, gives aid and comfort to the church and creed with which it is connected.

Thirdly : The twelve apostles who had been taught and ordained by Jesus, complied during his life and after his death with the ceremonial commands of the Mosaic law,

* NEANDER. Planting of the Christian Church. Book, III. Ch. III.

and they had no thought of recognizing any one as a Christian who should neglect them. Some years after the crucifixion (eight years according to the chronology in the Bible published by the American Bible Society), Peter, the chief of the apostles, made a visit to Cesarea (*Acts* X. 24—48), where he fell in with some Gentiles, who believed, having been converted probably by Paul. He delivered a sermon to them, beginning “of a truth, *I perceive* that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him”. The whole expression shows that the doctrine was a new one to him. When Peter returned to Jerusalem, “the apostles and brethren that were in Judea”, having heard of his keeping company with uncircumcised Gentiles, eating with them, and even recognizing them as brethren in Christ, were so much alarmed at his unheard-of conduct, that they called him to a public account for it (*Acts* XI. 1—18). He confessed the charges against him, and made a speech in self-defense. And how did he justify himself? By appealing to the notorious doctrine of the Church? Not at all. By appealing to the words of Jesus, as authority for admitting uncircumcised Gentiles into the Church? Never a word of it. He did not recall to the mind of his hearers any teachings of their divine master in regard to the equality of all men before God, to the absurdity of all ceremonies, the all importance of form-free love of God and man. No! These new principles he had learned not from Christ, not from his brother apostles, not from the church. How then did he learn them? He learned them from a dream—from a dream which he had all to himself a few weeks previously. While he was in Joppa, just before going to Cesarea, he had a vision, in which a cloth was let down from heaven, containing a number of clean and unclean animals, and a voice ordered him to slay and eat. Peter, in vision, accustomed to communication in that way with the heavenly powers, and knowing Jehovah’s voice, with a very commendable degree of prudence refused, and said: “Not so, Lord, for nothing common or unclean hath ever at any time entered into my mouth.” But the voice answered me [Peter], again from heaven: ‘What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common’. And this was done three times;

and all were drawn up again into heaven". That was how Peter learned that circumcision was bad, and pork good. "The apostles and brethren that were in Judea", believed his story of the vision, and received it as a complete justification; but they were nevertheless astonished at it, and exclaimed "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life"! Previous to that time, they did not even know that Gentiles could get to heaven at all! Such is the inevitable conclusion from the whole narrative. Then Jesus never taught his apostles that his purpose was to overthrow the Mosaic law, and establish in its place a universal religion. He never taught that the Gentiles should be admitted into the church, never taught that they should be saved without circumcision.

Fourthly: The first and chief Christian missionary to the Gentiles, the missionary who claimed them as his exclusive field, was Paul, who received none of his teaching from Jesus, and was a bitter enemy, a savage persecutor of the Christians until two years after the crucifixion. Peter said "God made a choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel and believe" (*Acts XV. 7*). In that phrase Peter recognized no associate as chosen by God to aid him in converting the heathen. But what does Paul say to that? He says: "The Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter" (*Gal. II. 7*). He claimed that the field of the uncircumcised was his own exclusively. And how was it that, if Peter was chosen by God as apostle to the Gentiles, that he had no vision until after Paul was converted, and had preached to the heathen for six years? (*Acts IX. 20—X. 20*). Peter's vision was a great waste of dream-stuff; he might have obtained all his information from Paul, who had made that same doctrine common about the country for years. Paul was proud of the originality of his doctrine, and he says "I neither received it from man, neither was I taught it, but by the [special and secret] revelation of Jesus Christ" *Gal. I. 12*.

Fifthly: All the Christians in Jerusalem a quarter of a century after the death of Jesus, were "zealous" observers

of the Jewish law (*Acts XXI. 20*). "The * Jews and Christians united in the worship of the temple until the destruction of the city. The evidences of this fact are to be found not only in the New Testament, but it is clear that there must have been a continual war between Levites and the followers of Jesus, if the latter had neglected the service of the temple, of which we have no rumor". "The Jewish Christians † from their first appearance as a heretical sect [that is as I understand it from the time that Paul began to preach the neglect of the Mosaic ceremonies] did not regard the books of the New Testament as *sacred* books. Their sacred books consisted of the Old Testament of which they considered the canon as closed. They rejected the epistles of St. Paul, not because they doubted their genuineness, but believing them to be genuine, and viewing him as an apostate from their law. No Gospel, except that of Matthew, nor any other books of the New Testament, was in common use among them. They did not, like the vast majority of Christians, regard Jesus as the founder of a new religion, but only as a restorer of their old religion to its original purity. To think otherwise was in their opinion 'to apostatize from Moses' (*Acts XXI. 21*), as St. Paul had taught his disciples to do. In acknowledging Jesus to be the Messiah, they regarded him as the Messiah of his followers among the nation, and of such others as might, upon certain terms, be associated with them; and probably thought much less of what he had done or taught, than of what he would hereafter do for them at his expected re-appearance upon earth. According to Jerome, they were anticipating, even in his time, the worldly delights of the coming millenium". "At the end of the second century, the Jewish Christians, in general, with, perhaps, some individual acceptions, were regarded as heretics under the name of Ebionites", ‡ and before the end of the fifth century, that sect had disappeared, and with it the remnants of the Jewish churches (if that name could be given them) established by Jesus and his apostles. From first to last we find these Jewish Christians differing in doctrine

* SCHLEIERMACHER. *Geschichte der Christlichen Kirche.*

† NORTON. *Genuineness of the Gospels.*

‡ The Same.

from Paul ; and when we consider the great improbability that they should change their faith, while they must have known that it was rapidly gaining ground elsewhere, we must conclude that their creed was the same at the end of the second century as in the middle of the first.

Sixthly : Jesus selected twelve apostles—one for each Jewish tribe and none for the Gentiles ; and he promised them that “ When the son of man shall sit on the throne of glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel ” (*Mat. XIX. 28*). No place is left here for a thirteenth apostle, nor is any account taken of those whom he should convert.

Seventhly : Jesus did not teach the doctrines which have been made the corner-stones of the new faith built upon the ruins of the Mosaic ceremonies. If he had intended to teach a new religion he would certainly have used the words “ new covenant ” or some equivalent, but that was left for the author of *Hebrews*. If Jesus had intended to teach that his religion should be universal, he must have said something of the expiatory virtue of his blood, as sufficing to wash out the sin of Adam, but he said nothing of that kind. He never used the words “ expiate ”, “ expiation ”, “ atone ”, “ atonement ”, “ redeem ” or “ redemption ”, or any equivalents. He never used any words implying that by Adam’s sin, men were condemned to hell. He knew very well that the Jews understood the punishment of Adam to have been confined to this world alone, and yet he never corrected the opinion, which according to Paul is entirely erroneous. It was because all men were condemned to hell for Adam’s sin that salvation became possible, but Jesus never hinted the possibility of such salvation. Now, surely modesty could not have prevented Jesus from teaching the main points of the religion which his followers were to believe, neither could he have omitted such teaching out of mere neglect nor if he had taught it, could his biographers have failed to record it : therefore we must conclude that the present Christian doctrines of salvation and atonement formed no part of his teaching. It was by virtue of the atonement that salvation was placed within the reach of all men, according to the present Christian doctrine, but Jesus taught nothing of that kind to his

apostles. A child twelve years of age, could now teach Peter and John in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity ! Such a child could teach even Jesus himself, for when the latter was asked by a young man what he should do that he might have "eternal life" (*Mat XIX.* 16-22), he gave an answer which entirely ignored the chief truths of his Gospel as now taught. The twelve apostles might well distrust Paul when he taught doctrines which, as he pretended, were revealed to him by Jesus, and which were irreconcilable with the doctrines which Jesus had taught while on earth. Besides if he had seen fit to make a subsequent revelation he was bound in honor and policy to make it to them, at least as soon as to any one else, more especially after he had promised them that he would "guide them into all truth" (*John XVI.* 13), and that the Holy Ghost should teach them "all things" (*John XIV.* 26). Neither did Jesus use the words "Incarnation" or "Trinity", or any equivalent words, signifying doctrines entirely irreconcilable with the Mosaic theology. When we consider these things, we must conclude either that the Christianity of the present age is not the teaching of Jesus, or else that his teaching is not truly represented in the four Gospels. It is clear to any reasonable man that the teachings of Jesus, as given by the Evangelists, could not be made the basis of a separate and durable church, and his teachings would have expired with the Ebionites, if Paul had not seen fit to take them as a foundation for a great scheme which proved successful beyond example.

The weight of this evidence appears to me irresistible. Jesus respected and taught his disciples to respect the ceremonial law of Moses : he thought that Israelitish blood, circumcision, sacrifices, and fasting were necessary as means of attaining the favor of Jehovah : and he did not intend or conceive the establishment of a universal religion, in which all men should be considered as equal before God. His highest ambition was either to found a new Jewish sect, or to lead his people in a revolt against the Romans, and to discover which of these was his purpose is now impossible for want of information. In no case does his teaching, so far as considered in itself, entitle him to our admiration as a great moral hero.

§ 21. It will hereafter in the course of this work (Ch. XVI.) be conclusively shown that there is no important original doctrine among the teachings of Jesus ; and it has never been asserted that he furnished any new light to the understanding, or produced any new evidence of the dogmas which he taught at second hand. What proof have the Christians to-day of the truth of the immortality of the soul, more than Socrates had? Not a particle, except such as they get by shutting the eyes of their reason and opening the mouth of their credulity. The morality of the Bible is properly the subject of a separate chapter, (see Ch. XV), but a few remarks may be made here on the more prominent doctrines of Jesus. Many of his virtues were of a monkish cast. He taught humility, charity, love to all men, utter neglect of pecuniary wealth, passive submission to evil and oppression, and fasting (*Mat. VI. 18*). He never directed his disciples to marry, or to labor, or to exercise that prudence in pecuniary matters which is necessary for the welfare of the family. He even went so far as to recommend self-castration. He neglected to teach much which a great moralist should have taught : he never condemned polygamy and slavery, those "twin-relics of barbarism", he never taught the rights of self-government and religious toleration : indeed, he never hinted that men had any inalienable rights. He never recognized, directly or indirectly, the great maxims of political, social and religious freedom and equality, on which much of our modern morality is based.

§ 22. The conduct of Jesus was frequently that of a weak and timorous man. The Jews sought repeatedly to kill him, and when he had an opportunity he as often fled and concealed himself (*John VIII. 59, XI. 54*), exhibiting little of that heroism which taught Socrates to refuse to escape when his friends had bribed the jailor. He spent little time in the cities, having gone to Jerusalem only three or four times in his life, and having remained there only a few days at a time. He was unable to make converts in the towns, and did most of his teaching among the rude Galileans. He even prohibited his disciples to reveal his claim to the Messiahship (*Mat. XVI. 20—28. Mark. VIII. 30*). When the Roman soldiers at last arrested

him, they found him if not secreted, at least on a solitary portion of the Mount of Olives. They required a guide not only to point out the place, but also the person. So little was this king of the Jews known, that the Romans were compelled to pay one of his apostles to turn traitor and act as guide.

The near approach of death was so fearful to him that he was quite unmanned. He prayed, " ' Father, if thou be willing, *remove* this cup from me ; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.' " And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an *agony* he prayed earnestly ; and his sweat was it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (*Luke XXII. 42, 44.*) Is that the conduct of a great man ? How different the deportment of Socrates who drank the fatal hemlock in the midst of his disciples, not sweating, and praying in agony, but apparently the happiest and most composed of the whole company ! *His* personal character was such that his friends were never more attentive and reverential than after his arrest, while the followers of Jesus with the exception of one or two fled at the approach of misfortune and never went near him, until after his crucifixion. Socrates died contentedly with no repining at his fate ; while the agony and despair of Jesus appear to have increased till the final moment of his life, and with his last words, he uttered a reproach against his Deity, " My God, my God ! Why hast thou forsaken me ? " *Mark. XV. 34.*

It seems that Jesus was a poor judge of character and not capable of exercising any great influence on his intimate acquaintances ; otherwise he would not have been betrayed. He admitted that he had been deceived in Judas by saying that the treachery of the latter was the fulfilment of the words of David, " *Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread hath lifted up his heel against me* " *John XIII. 18. Ps. XLI. 9.*

Jesus was not free from many low superstitions received by the Jews of his age. He believed that certain diseases, common among men, were caused by the entrance of devils into the human body (*Mat. XII. 22—28*) ; he admitted the power of sorcerers to perform miracles (*Mat. VII. 22, 23*) ; and on one occasion he asserted that a man had been

blind from his birth, "that the works of God should be made manifest in him," by a miraculous cure at the hands of Jesus. The poor blind man would probably have preferred that God had found some other occasion for making his works manifest.

§ 23. In several recorded instances, Jesus showed a petty spitefulness, inconsistent with greatness of soul. Once upon a time (*Mark. XI. 11—14, 20, 21*), he, with some disciples, was going from Bethany to Jerusalem, when he was hungry,

"And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; *for the time of figs was not yet*. And Jesus answered [was that word inspired?] and said unto it, 'No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever.' And his disciples heard it. * * * And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance, saith unto him, 'Master, behold the fig-tree, which thou cursedst, is withered away.'"

It is said that Zeno, the Stoic, once ran against a stone-table in the dark and hurting himself upon it, was so enraged that he took revenge by breaking the table to pieces with a hammer; so the act of Jesus was not without a precedent. Zeno, however, did not know that the table was there; but Jesus knew it was not the season for figs.

Notwithstanding the fact that "most of his mighty works" were done in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, those towns furnished no converts to his doctrine and he vented his spite in curses upon them, saying

"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes. But, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, thou shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which were done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained till this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment than for thee" *Mat. XI. 20—24*.

Is that admirable? Are cities morally responsible? Were there not many people in those towns, who had never

heard his doctrine? Were they worse than the Sodomites? Were miracles a proper proof of doctrines?

§ 24. The language ascribed to Jesus in his conversation and disputation, often exhibits a narrow mind and a quibbling, shuffling disposition. Matthew (*IV.* 1, 2, 8, 9, 10) relates that "Jesus was led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards a-hungered. * * * The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' Then saith Jesus unto him, 'Get thee hence Satan, *for* it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'" This story is related with all gravity by the first three Evangelists as though they believed it to be literally true. They make Jesus as great a pedant as themselves. He refused to worship the devil, not because it was wrong, but because it was contrary to Scripture.

Jesus, while speaking to the Jews in the temple, said, "I and my Father are one." Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, 'Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?' The Jews answered him saying 'For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy and because that thou being a man, makest thyself God.' Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in the law, I said ye are gods?' What pitiful subterfuges for a divinity! He claimed divinity (as the Trinitarians say) equal to that of Jehovah—rank blasphemy as a man could commit; and when threatened with the punishment affixed to the crime by law, he pleads that Jehovah had once said, "Ye [all the Jews] are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High" (*Ps. LXXXII.* 6). He sneaks out of the danger by pretending that in saying he was a god, he meant no more than that he was a god in the sense that all the Jews were. Such a miserable dodge would disgrace a second-rate village pettifogger. And then his pretense of ignorance that he had committed blasphemy by asking for which of his "good works" they would stone him!

As though I should go out into the street, and furnish aid to a number of suffering persons, and then knock a man down unjustifiably, and upon being arrested for the offense should ask the policeman for which deed of charity he had arrested me.

“ There came to him [walking in the Temple] the chief-priests, and scribes, and the elders, and said unto him : ‘ By what authority doest thou these things [his miracles] ? and who gave thee this authority to do these things ? ’ And Jesus answered and said unto them ‘ I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from Heaven or of men ? Answer me ! ’ And they reasoned with themselves, saying ‘ If we shall say ‘ from Heaven,’ he will say ‘ Why then did ye not believe him.’ But, if we shall say ‘ of men ’ : they feared the people ; for all men counted John, that he was a prophet, indeed. And they answered and said unto Jesus, ‘ We cannot tell ! ’ And Jesus answering said unto them, ‘ Neither do I tell you, by what authority I do these things. ’ ” *Mark XI. 27-33.*

It is singular that inspiration did not protect the Evangelist from such confusion and absurdity, as results from his awkward change from “ we ” to “ they ” in the remarks of the Pharisees, when they “ reasoned with themselves.” Jesus dodged their question which threatened to get him into trouble, by asking one which, if answered candidly, would get them into trouble, and the parties quit evenly ; neither having acquired any honor, or having shown any very candid disposition. It is not stated that they had any improper object in making this inquiry which was in itself perfectly proper, himself having admitted that wicked men might prophesy, and cast out devils, and do wonderful works (*Mat. VII. 22, 23*). If the question was asked from good motives, he should have answered it directly, and explicitly ; if it was asked from bad motives, he should not have answered it at all.

So on another occasion, certain Pharisees sought to embroil him, by getting him to commit himself for or against the Roman dominion. If he spoke against the Emperor he would be guilty of treason, and in danger of losing his head ; if he spoke in favor of the Romans, he would offend the Jews, who had a bitter hatred for the foreign yoke, and whom it was necessary to conciliate before he could convert.

The Pharisees asked, “‘Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar or not?’ But Jesus perceived their wickedness and said; ‘Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money.’ And they brought unto him a penny. And he said unto them, ‘Whose is this image and superscription?’ They said unto him, ‘Cesars.’ Then said he unto them, ‘Render *therefore* unto Cesar the things which are Cesars.’”

In this reply Jesus used a contemptible quibble, speaking as though the image and superscription on the coin gave Cesar an everlasting property in it, and as though the Roman government had not paid it out for a fair consideration. ‘Render *therefore*’ because Cesar’s head and name were on the coin. How would it have been if the coin had been from a Greek mint? He asked for the “tribute money.” Now the question was, whether there should be any tribute money. Had not his opponents been so simple as to submit to his assumption of the question at issue by offering him a coin as “tribute money,” they would have effectually prevented his quibbling reply. The question which they asked was a proper one—it was an important and intricate moral question on which the views of the people were divided; and as a teacher of morality, it was his duty to meet it fairly, to give a correct decision, and to base it on correct grounds. The decision as given is right, but its effect is spoiled by the reasons why. If a man say, he is a member of the democratic party, I find no fault with him for that; but if he say, he is a democrat because Gen. Jackson appointed his father to a postmastership, I must despise his democracy. If Jesus had said, “Moral duty requires you to pay tribute to Rome,” or if he had said, “Pay tribute to Rome, because a refusal will bring war and disaster on our country,” no one could find fault; but he makes himself ridiculous when he says that tribute should be paid, because Cesar’s name was on the coin. No baseness of motive on the part of the Pharisees could justify his reply; as a moralist his words were addressed to the whole human race.

The conduct of Jesus in the case of the woman taken in adultery (*John VIII. 1-12*), is praised very much, with very little reason. When he was in the temple one morning, the Pharisees, “that they might have to accuse him,” took to him a woman, who had been arrested in the act of

adultery, and asked him what should be done with her. Under the Jewish law, adultery was a crime punishable with death (*Deut. XXII. 22.*). Jesus assumed the function of judge unhesitatingly, and without inquiring into the testimony to see whether the woman was really guilty, or what the circumstances, if guilty, he replied "He, that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone." And the Pharisees let the woman go. Now, certainly Jesus was not the only man in the world who would be loth to see every woman stoned to death, who might be taken in adultery—an offense seldom productive of any direct evil, and often committed under palliating circumstances. ~~As~~ for the idea that men should be slow to stone others for sins no greater than their own—that the beams in one's own eyes should be considered, as well as the motes in the eyes of others,—that was as old as human nature. Adam probably made some such remark as that, the first time that Eve scolded him. But Jesus said, "let him that is *without sin*;" did he mean that none but sinless men have a right to punish others? or what was his meaning?

A Gentile woman applied to Jesus, calling him the son of David, to cure her sick child. He answered her, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then came she and worshipped him, saying, "Lord help me!" But he answered and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and throw it to the *dogs*" (*Mat. XV. 23-28*). He was very complimentary to the Gentiles. They were but "dogs" as compared with the precious Jews, who would be robbed of their exclusive privileges, if he should speak a word to effect a miraculous and instantaneous cure of the suffering child. The poor woman continued her solicitation, and in consideration of her great faith—and not for the sake of afflicted humanity at all, without any abatement from his general principle that it would be great waste to heal or save a Gentile—he wrought the cure.

§ 25. I shall next endeavor to show that Jesus was probably executed for sedition, under the Roman laws. The violation of human laws does not necessarily imply moral wrong; for the laws may be unjust. But in the case of the Roman laws against treason, Jesus himself admitted

their substantial justice. He told his followers that sedition was a sin, and thereby indirectly approved substantially of the laws providing for the punishment of that crime. He was executed in accordance with the forms of law, after trial before a Roman court. The Evangelists say that the only accusation against him was violation of the Mosaic Law, and that the sentence of death was given under that accusation. There is cause to doubt whether this assertion be true. The Mosaic code was not recognized as sacred or binding, nor its violation as criminal by the Roman law ; and it is not probable that a sentence of death would be pronounced in notorious disregard of the law, by officers who could take no interest in the alleged transgression. Besides we find that Jesus might legally have been executed for offenses against the Roman law. While he was on trial he admitted that he claimed the title of " the King of the Jews," and the mere assumption of that title, under his circumstances was a capital crime—more particularly, if assumed without the explanation which Christians now give, that his kingdom was entirely spiritual, and which Jesus himself refused to give to the court. Indeed, under the circumstances, if Jesus had been accused of sedition, the Romans must have found him guilty under their law, and have sentenced him to death. The Jews were very impatient of the Roman yoke, and anxiously wishing that some one would raise the standard of rebellion with a prospect of success. They were expecting a Messiah, foretold by their prophets, who should be a descendant of David, should become their King, should free them from foreign servitude, and reestablish the kingdom of Israel with all the glory, power and prosperity, which it has enjoyed during the reign of David. So soon as this Messiah should appear, it was a well-understood matter among the Jews that they should all rally to his standard against the impure Gentile oppressor. Under this state of affairs, the Romans heard that an obscure individual was going about among the people in the different provinces of Judea, preaching and organizing a party, and ordering his adherents to follow him. In time, they heard that this would-be leader of men was named Jesus, that he claimed to be a descendant of David, and to be *the* Messiah. Of course,

the Romans could not understand that word in any other meaning than the one given to it by all the Jews,—the founder of a new era of national independence and prosperity—the leader of a revolt. He was arrested, and he asserted in open court that he was “the King of the Jews.” That assertion unexplained was the confession of a capital crime for one in his circumstances. He refused to explain. If he had had no intention to violate the Roman law, he could certainly have produced abundant evidence that he had no criminal intent, and refusing to produce it, he was the cause of his own death.

The theory that Jesus was crucified for sedition is confirmed by the superscription placed on the cross, and by the taunts of the people. Pilate, far from being indifferent to the execution, wrote the taunting sign “This is the king of the Jews.” And the spectators wagged their heads at him, and ridiculed “the king of the Jews.” They said nothing of his enmity to the laws of Moses, nothing of his being a false prophet or a blasphemer. Now, if he had been executed at the instance of the Jews for violation of their laws, they would have taunted him with words referring to his religious pretensions ; and they would never have ridiculed an attempt, made by him to free them from the yoke which every day galled every man of the race to the bone. They might think a proposed revolt injudicious, but the fear of others of their race, if not their own sympathies would prevent them from ridiculing its author. It is not the nature of men sorely oppressed to insult the memory of one of their kin, who has died in resisting the oppressor.

§ 26. Let it be granted, however, that Jesus was executed, not for sedition, but for offenses against the Jewish law ; and let us ask whether he was guilty of any capital offense under that law. The Levites said “We have a law, and by our law he ought to die” (*John XIX. 7*). The law is in our possession, and we can examine whether he was guilty. Jesus had admitted the divine authority of that law, and therefore Christians have no right to complain on the score of justice, provided that the execution was legal. The question is not one of morality, but of legality. Was Jesus guilty of blasphemy ? And was the punishment of blasphemy death ? If both these questions be

answered in the affirmative, then we must say that he was put to death legally under laws which he pretended to have himself written ; and his followers could have no right to complain of his having been executed unjustly.

The claim of divinity is recognized by all lexicographers as a kind of blasphemy, and under all codes of ecclesiastical law, it is held to be one of the most flagrant forms of the crime. If a man should say now that he is God Almighty, Christians would say he blasphemes. But that is the very offense of which Jesus was guilty. He said " I and my Father [Jehovah] are one " (*John X. 30*). This he retracted when the Jews were about to stone him, by saying that he was a god in the sense that all the Jews were gods, and sons of the most High, as the Psalmist had declared them to be. That retraction, however, did not destroy the previous crime. Afterwards, on trial, he said that he was the son of God, and should be seen " sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven " (*Mat. XXIV. 64*). These words as well as those above quoted were immediately declared to be blasphemy by the Jews who heard them : and on the former occasion, Jesus did not deny the blasphemy of the meaning as understood by them, but said that they had misunderstood him. The repetition of words amounting to the same thing on trial, must have removed any doubt upon the mind of the judges. The Christian may say that the claim of divinity, though blasphemous if made by any man, was not so when made by Jesus, because he was really divine. But he bore the shape of a man ; he had used words which were criminal by the law ; he was arrested like a man for the offense ; he was tried by human judges ; the use of words, blasphemous in their ordinary acceptation, was proved ; and this proof was sufficient, if not rebutted, to require his condemnation. The burden of proof then rested upon him ; it was his place to show that the words were not criminal, or that, what was blasphemy in others, was not blasphemy in him. He failed to furnish that proof, and he was legally found guilty.

In codes of criminal law it is, and was customary to prohibit and affix penalties to crimes such as murder, robbery, etc., and leave the meaning of those words to be fixed by judicial decisions. Thus, " blasphemy " is declared to be a

capital crime in the Pentateuch ; but there is no definition of the word in the Bible. It, however, appears to have been applicable to many offenses against the dignity of God, and the inspiration of his law. Thus the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (X. 28) says " He who despised Moses' law, died without mercy ". Now, Jesus despised the Mosaic law ; that is to say, he treated some portions of it as of no authority, more particularly in regard to marriage, divorce, swearing, revenge, etc., and for this he was guilty of a capital crime.


Moses gave his law to last forever, forbade any change in it by addition or diminution (*Deut. IV. 2*), and called down curses on him who should not confirm all its words to do them (*Deut. XXVII. 26*). He also said that the Levites were the heirs of Jehovah's ministry forever (*Deut. XVIII. 5*), ordered the children of Israel to forsake them not so long as they should live upon the earth (*Deut. XII. 19*) and decreed that he who should " do presumptuously " and should not " hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord ", should die (*Deut. XVII. 12*). All the various offenses here prohibited, are not expressly classed under the head of blasphemy, yet they were probably understood to belong there. That Jesus committed these offenses, is not to be denied. The punishment of blasphemy, under the Mosaic code, was death. " He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord ", says the Lawgiver (*Lev. XXIV. 16*) " shall surely be put to death ". Again, the prophet, who should speak words which God had not commanded him to speak, should die (*Deut. XVIII. 20*). The prophet here would be interpreted to mean any one who claimed a divine mission ; and when put upon trial, the accused would have to prove the truth of his prophetic character by doing such miracles, as were reported to have been done by the early prophets of the nation, when they sought to convince the people of their authority. Such miracles Jesus did not perform before the court, nor before the Scribes and Pharisees who asked for " signs " from him, and thus again we must conclude that he was guilty of a capital offense against the law of Moses, and that he deserved death, if the law was just.

§ 27. The history of Jesus may be hunted through in

the vain search for the record of one noble action, of one great and original doctrine, of one eloquent speech. No man could live to the age of thirty years, without having frequent opportunities to show his disposition and abilities in his actions. A magnanimous soul will find occasions to perform magnanimous deeds ; and since the Evangelists, knowing, as they did, by inspiration, all that he had ever done, have recorded no magnanimous deeds of him, we must presume that he never did any, and that he wanted greatness of mind. No one has claimed that his miracles, if wrought as reported, evince any great moral qualities ; for it was a Biblical doctrine that bad men might perform miracles. The sermon on the mount [*Mat. VI V. VII.*], is undoubtedly more creditable to Jesus than any thing else that he ever said or did ; but there is no divine wisdom about it. It appears very holy to those who believe the New Testament inspired, for such a belief is like a pair of strongly colored spectacles—it completely changes the appearance of every thing which a man looks at.

The true hero of the New Testament, the author of the books, the teacher of the doctrine, and the builder of the churches was not Jesus, but Paul. Jesus taught his doctrine for only two or three years, and spent a considerable portion of that time in the wilderness. He made few converts ; he did not commit his doctrine to writing. There is nothing of his composition in the New Testament, though the Evangelists pretend to report his literal words on many occasions. We know nothing of the events of his life from the time he was twelve, until he was thirty years of age. We know little of the details of his travels after he declared his mission. Of Paul, on the contrary, we know much. The *Acts* is a better and more complete history of Paul than can be found of Jesus in all the four Evangelists. His voyages and their incidents are related with a historic consecutiveness and detail. His words are written down particularly. Paul preached the Gospel actively for a quarter of a century, and was fortunate enough to be enabled to commit his teaching to writing, which is now the largest and most important portion of the New Testament. Paul was the author of much of the present Christian doctrine. Jesus prevaricated, as we have seen ; Paul “ took the bull

by the horns"; from the very beginning, he declared "war to the knife" against all the Mosaic ceremonial, and he fought the battle vigorously, never yielding ground, except on one occasion, when he saw that he must lie, or suffer martyrdom : and he preferred the lying. It is to Paul that the Christian world is indebted for the abolition of circumcision, of sacrifice, the Mosaic Sabbath, the hereditary priesthood, the law of unclean meats, and all the ceremonies of the old law ; or rather, it is to Paul that Christianity owes its existence, for without his agency, it would never have extended beyond Judea, and there it would soon have died out, because it lacked vital power as taught by Jesus and the legitimate apostles. Jesus organized no Churches, and established no congregations, without which there could be no permanency, and extensive influence. Paul did organize Churches, and he organized nearly, if not quite all the Churches from the which Christian world has obtained its teachers and doctrines. The Jewish Christians, those who had been converted by Jesus and his legitimate apostles, adhered so strictly to the Mosaic law, that Paul's followers would not recognize them, and they were soon given over to the devil as hopeless heretics. Paul then is the true hero of the New Testament, and what kind of a hero, we shall see in the next chapter.



CHAPTER V.

PAUL AN IMPOSTOR.

“That fellow Paul—the *parvenu*”.

ST. PETER, *In the Vision of Judgment*.

§ 28. In this chapter I shall attempt to prove that Paul was not a true convert to the doctrine of Christ, that he joined the church from base motives, that he was not recognized as a good Christian by the Churches in Judea, nor as an apostle by the twelve chosen by Jesus, and that the Jewish Christians hated him to such an extent that his life was not safe among them. This proof, if produced, will be a severe blow at the divine inspiration of the New Testament, the true hero of which is Paul.

Some reader may say in the beginning, that “such attempt to prove Paul an impostor, must fail, for the proofs of his piety are familiar to all. No one can be ignorant of his powerful exhortations to humility, charity, forbearance, forgiveness of injuries, brotherly love, and submission to the powers that be : and no one who comprehends the force of these exhortations can believe them to come from a wicked man.” But to this I reply that it is an easy matter for a knave to repeat pious doctrines, and even the devil has been known to quote Scripture with a good grace. Besides many men preach morality with all sincerity but do not always practise it,—the flesh being often too strong for the weakness of the spirit. Society is not always governed in its views of a man's character, by the doctrines which he teaches. When a priest or clergyman is accused before the Church of adultery, people do not say he must be innocent because he preaches “*such* virtuous doctrines”, but they ask, “What are the proofs?” “Call up the witnesses!” “How many are there?” “What did he do to them?” Even the most pious like to know the full particulars, for although we do not wish that an honest man were a rogue,

yet we wish to know who the rogues are. Now, I accuse Paul of imposture, and demand an examination of the witnesses.

All our knowledge of the Christian Churches for thirty-five years subsequent to the crucifixion of Jesus is derived from the *Acts of the Apostles* and the epistles of Paul as contained in the New Testament. In giving the history of Christianity, during this period, the best modern Church historians place very little reliance upon information from any other source. They refer to traditions given in the writings of the Christian fathers, but speak of them as wanting in trustworthiness. The book of the *Acts* was written by a friend and companion of Paul (*Acts XXVII. 2*), and tradition says it was read and approved by him. It is to a great extent a history of Paul, and much of the information in it was evidently obtained from his lips. Indeed, most of the information, which will appear important to us here, could have been obtained by no other means, so easily and naturally. Thus, we may consider all our church-history for half a century subsequent to the crucifixion as coming from Paul. The only security for his truthfulness, the only external check upon him, was the knowledge of other men, who might bring him into disgrace, if he should lie. But the more important facts, those which might be disputed, and which he might be interested in misrepresenting, occurred in Judea, far from his place of residence (Rome) a quarter of a century before the records were published : and the publication was made among the Greeks and Roman congregations, who knew nothing of the facts, who had little intercourse with Jerusalem, and who were interested with Paul in the matters in dispute. The genuineness of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* is denied by many of the Christians and by me. There is a tradition that Peter went to Rome, but the tradition comes on a very questionable shape and from unreliable source ; and it is contradicted by the silence of Paul in all his Epistles, and particularly in one passage (*Col. IV. 10. 11*) where he refers to his associates, and by the express language of the first Epistle of Peter, (*1. Pet. I. 1*), which mentions him as an apostle to "the strangers throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia", and is written from

Babylon (1. *Pet.* V. 13). Catholics say that by Babylon he means Rome : for they want to prove that Peter was at Rome and founded their holy church. Many Protestants say he meant Rome, when he said Babylon : for they want to prove that Rome is the "whore of Babylon" spoken of in Revelations. But when we remember that in the time of Jesus there were still many Jews about Babylon, descendants of the Babylonian captives, we cannot reject the plain meaning of the word, confirmed by the first verse of the Epistle.

There is no reason why we should not exercise a wholesome discretion in reading Paul, for we know that the apostles, chosen by Jesus during his life, and benefited by his constant companionship and teaching, were not free from sin. Witness the conduct of Peter in denying his Savior, that of John in presumptuously asking for seats on the right hand and on the left in the new kingdom, and of James in desiring to destroy an unbelieving village. These were the favorite apostles of Jesus during his life, and the leaders of the Church after his death. Surely, if they might sin, Paul might too. Let us beware then, that if he should sin, we be not deceived by him.

The first mention, made of Paul in the New Testament, is in the *Acts*, where it is said that when he, then called Saul, was going to Damascus (two years after the crucifixion, according to the chronology received by the Church) to persecute the Christians, he was suddenly surrounded by a great light, and a voice from heaven demanded why he persecuted Jesus, and ordered him to become a preacher of the Gospel. This miracle made him a Christian : he went on to Damascus, and a few days afterwards began to preach the religion of Christ. There are three accounts of this miracle in the New Testament, and each is inconsistent with the other two. One account says the men with Paul fell down : another that they stood up : one says that Paul received his commission as apostle on the spot : another that his orders were communicated to him in Damascus. The first narrative tells us that the men with Paul heard a voice, but saw no man : the second narrative says they saw the light, but heard not the voice. For the particulars of these and other contradictions in the accounts of

this miracle, see Ch. XIII. All these stories come from Paul, and their contradictions naturally throw a suspicion on his honesty. He does not tell the names of the men who were with him, nor the place or the date of the occurrence. There is no appeal to living witnesses—no attempt to prevent the possibility of doubt or denial in the minds of sensible and honest men. And what does Paul do after this wonderful conversion? Does he go to the apostles in Jerusalem to be cheered and instructed by them? Does he ask them to relate to him the words of their master? Does he lament his blindness for not believing while the Savior was alive? Does he sorrow over his misfortune in not having enjoyed the pleasure of the society, and the benefit of the teaching of that divine man? Does he express his repentance for his persecutions? Does he ask them to confirm him? Does he beg them to lay their hands upon him, and breathe upon him, as Christ had breathed the Holy Ghost upon them? Not at all! He boasted that he was not taught by man, he had “conferred not with flesh and blood:” “neither went I up to Jerusalem, [says he] to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia and returned again to Damascus” (*Gal. I. 16. 17.*). The only confirmation, received by Paul, was that a certain Ananias, a Christian of Damascus of unknown character and ecclesiastical pedigree, laid hands upon him: and with that, and the stock of sanctity and light acquired in his conversion, he sets out at once to preach the Gospel, without asking any advice of the legitimate heads of the church as to the how, where and when: and he presumes to teach doctrines which Jesus and the apostles never taught. Paul even goes so far as to call himself “an apostle” (*Rom. I. 1.*), though Jesus had restricted that title to twelve, and had never intimated the remotest possibility of there being a thirteenth. Paul said, that he did not go to Jerusalem after his conversion, but this was a falsehood, to which he might have been incited by mortification at the manner in which he was received. He did go to Jerusalem within a few days after his conversion, and “assayed to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple” (*Acts IX. 26*). The apostles were told of the wonderful conversion of this per-

secutor of the church, of this accomplice in the murder of Stephen (*Acts VIII. 1. XXII. 20*): but he did not tell them that he was apostle; they did not recognise him as an apostle: they did not counsel with him as to what he should do; but "they sent him forth to Tarsus" (*Acts IX. 30*) after "which had the churches rest throughout all Judea." Three years afterwards, as he himself says, he was "unknown by face unto the churches in Judea, which were in Christ" (*Gal. I. 12*): and yet on another occasion he said that he preached first at "Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles" (*Acts XVI. 20*). After considering these plain facts, who can believe that Paul was a sincere convert to the teachings of Jesus?

When this miracle-begotten apostle had been preaching to the Gentiles for three years, he went to Jerusalem, and staid two weeks with Peter. He saw no apostles save Peter and James, and so far as the record says, did not consult with them about religious doctrines, nor preach to the people (*Gal. I. 18-22*). Fourteen years later he went up to Jerusalem again. During all this time he had been preaching among the Gentiles, and preaching doctrines acceptable to them. He found that they would not become Christians, if it were necessary for them to observe the ceremonial law of Moses. The Greeks and other heathen would not submit to circumcision, nor observe the Sabbaths or the feast days, nor abstain from pork, nor refuse to eat with pagans. Converted these heathen must be; converted they would not be, if they were required to adopt the mummeries of Moses; converted they might possibly be, if they were permitted to disregard those mummeries; and Paul gave them that permission. His gospel was different from that preached in Judea.

When he went to Jerusalem the second time, he says, "I went by revelation and communicated unto them *that* gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run or had run, in vain" (*Gal. II. 2*). He evidently gives us to understand that his gospel was different from that of every body else, and so far different, that it was even necessary for him to teach it in private. What

was "*that* gospel" which he preached among the Gentiles? Let his own words answer.

"By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified" (*Rom. III. 20*). He meant of course the Mosaic law, as that was known to Jews and Christians as "*the law*," and that was the only law, the observance of which was said among Jews and Christians to serve as justification. He thus spoke very disparagingly of the whole law on which all the Mosaic ceremonies were founded.

"There is nothing unclean of itself" (*Rom. XIV. 14*); "One believeth he may eat all things; another, *who is weak*, eateth herbs" (*Rom. XIV. 2*.) Thus he sets aside the Mosaic law of unclean meats.

"One man esteemeth one day above another. Another esteemeth every day alike" (*Rom. XIV. 5*). "In the Gentile churches [all the churches established by Paul]" says Neander* "all days of the week were considered alike suitable for the service of the church; and all preference of one day to another was regarded as quite foreign to the genius of the gospel;" but in after times, Sunday was found to be an excellent institution for aiding the priests to put money in their purse, and accordingly they reestablished it, as of divine ordinance.

"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing" (*Cor VII. 18*). Thus he declared that the surgical operation, which Jehovah had ordered the Israelites to perform on all their children was of no use whatever; and the man who practiced it was making a fool of himself, by taking useless trouble.

"There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek" (*Rom. X. 12*). Jehovah might have had a peculiar friendship for the seed of Abraham once, but he had learned better, since he had counselled with Paul.

As a consequence of these doctrines, Paul established churches entirely independent of the Synagogues, since the faithful Jews would have nothing to do with such a renegade. He also taught that Jesus came to establish a *new* religion, that Jesus was divine, that all men had been condemned to eternal hell for Adam's sin, that the blood of Jesus had atoned for this sin, that God was not one but three, &c.

* Planting of the Church, Book III. Ch. V.

Such was *that* gospel, preached by the thirteenth apostle, which he communicated in private to them that were of reputation in Jerusalem. This communication in private, however, did not suffice to keep him out of trouble. All the leaders in the church were against him. He complains (*Gal. II. 4*) of false brethren "who came in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." This complaint was made to the church at Galatia, converts from the Gentiles. The "liberty" referred to, was freedom from the Mosaic ceremonies; the bondage was subjection to those ceremonies. Paul would not yield to these false brethren: "to whom we gave place by subjection, no not for one hour." And then they snubbed him; "but of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me; God accepteth no man's person; for they, who seemed to be somewhat in conference, added nothing to me". (*Gal. II. 6.*). He would not yield an inch to them; he was just as good as they were; and when they wanted to perform a slight amputation on his friend, convert and companion, Titus, he answered indignantly to the purport that he would see them damned first. At last, these church leaders at Jerusalem gave way, according to Paul's account. "When James, Cephas [Peter], and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." The fact is, James, Cephas and John found they could not help themselves, and they told Paul, he might go away and preach as he pleased. That at least is a reasonable presumption.

Another account of this visit of Paul to Jerusalem, or rather of the council there on the occasion of the visit, is given in chapter XV. of the *Acts*. The author of that book says a council was called for the express purpose of considering what should be done about the observance of the Mosaic ceremonies among the Gentile converts made by Paul; and the decision of the council was that Paul was right. In this council, both James and Peter spoke in favor of Paul's view.

Soon after this council was held, Peter went down to

Antioch, and there he and Paul got into a great quarrel. Paul tells the story, thus : " When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles ; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him ; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But, when I saw that they walked *not uprightly* according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter, before them all,—‘ If thou’ ” &c. There was a beautiful state of affairs ! If that be true, Peter must have been an abominable hypocrite. He, the prince of the apostles, who in the council held only a few days before had been the first one to justify Paul ; he, that on coming to Antioch, had eaten with the Gentiles, to turn about so soon as others came who held a different doctrine ! And this same Peter, if the writer of *Acts* lie not, had preached to the Gentiles years before, and had eaten with them, and being called to account in Jerusalem had publicly defended himself before the church, (*Acts XI. 1—18*) and had been openly justified by the church. How mean then was this dissimulation in him—the head of the Church ! And when there was no occasion for it whatever ; for this James—the coming of whose friends frightened Peter—did not he zealously stand by him in the council to support Paul in disregarding the Mosaic ceremonies ? I say, if all this as written by Paul be true ? But, perhaps Paul lied. One thing is certain, either Peter is guilty of vile hypocrisy, or Paul of still viler falsehood. I am inclined to the belief that Paul is the sinner ; he said once that he was “ the chief of sinners ” (*1 Tim. I. 15*). We have only his version of all these affairs. In all probability, Peter never approved of the neglect of the Mosaic ceremonies. It is not likely that he would desert the teachings of Jesus to follow those of such an interloper as Paul. And how could Barnabas, Saul’s companion for many years in teaching the neglect of the Mosaic law, have joined Peter in refusing to eat with Gentiles, if he, Barnabas, had been present at a solemn council, where it had been decided—Peter voting “ ay ”—that it was proper to eat with the Gentiles ?

We shall find, before we get done with Mr. Paul, that he could lie considerably, and if such be the fact, we may as well find him guilty of lying on this occasion, and hold Peter innocent.

The last time that Paul went to Jerusalem, he got into a difficulty which led to a lawsuit, and ended in his being sent to Rome as a prisoner, to be tried there on appeal from a court in Judea. This difficulty, occurred in the year 58 A.D., and six years after the alleged date of the alleged council. When Paul told his friends and fellow-believers in Tyre and Cesarea of his purpose to visit Jerusalem, they opposed it strenuously, and begged him to abandon the idea. At Cesarea, one Agabus, "a prophet", took Paul's girdle and said, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" Other persons present besought Paul so urgently to stay away from Jerusalem that he replied, "What mean ye to weep and break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem" (*Acts XXI.* 11. 13). All his friends seemed to anticipate some great danger for him in the Holy City. What was that danger? It does not appear that Peter and James and their Christian disciples were in any peculiar danger at this time? None of the Christians had been killed there of late. Besides Paul was not out of danger in any place. The Damascenes had sought to kill him, and he had been arrested, beaten, and threatened with death in several cities. Why this peculiar danger for Paul? We shall see hereafter that it was because he was an enemy of the Mosaic law; because he taught his followers to disregard that law. But, if the record in the *Acts* be true, Paul was not the only one who taught this doctrine. Peter had taught it ten or twelve years before; and six years previous to this visit, a solemn council of the Church at Jerusalem, had under the leadership of Peter and James, openly and deliberately approved of Paul's course in teaching neglect of the Jewish law. Why then was the latter peculiarly obnoxious to the friends of the Jewish laws, "the Jews" spoken of by Agabus? The reason was that Paul was the only prominent man, known as an enemy of the law; the story of the

council is a lie. Now, to the evidence which supports that assertion, that fact.

Paul went to Jerusalem in accordance with his purpose, as announced. While in that city he did not stop at the house of Peter or James, or of any great teacher or rich member of the church, but with "one Mnason of Cyprus" who went in his own company. The day after his arrival he went to see James, and "all the elders were present," but no apostle save James. Peter probably had had enough of the thirteenth apostle at Antioch. Paul opened the conference by telling "What things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry, and when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, [making their glorification apparently very short] and said unto him, 'Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe ; and they are all zealous of the law ; and they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore ? [Something must be done]. The multitude must needs come together, for they will hear that thou art come. [Look out Paul, or these Jews which believe, will lynch you]. Do therefore this that we say to thee ; we have four men which have a vow on them. Them take and *purify thyself* with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads ; and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing ; but that thou, *thyself* also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. [Lie and swear to it, Paul, or the mob of Jews, which believe, will stone you]. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered the Temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until an offering should be offered for every one of them" (*Acts XXI. 15—32*). Paul concluded to accept the advice of James and the elders, and he entered the Temple to purify himself from a charge which we know to be true ; but "the Jews" did not wait for the "accomplishment of the days of purification", but raised a mob, siezed the purifier and were about to practice "eternal vigilance" by putting an end to his mortal career, when the Roman soldiers came and rescued

him. The Roman judge tried Paul, but finding his alleged crimes to be no offenses against the Roman law, was about to discharge him, when Paul, perhaps fearing to be left in Jerusalem without military protection, appealed to the Emperor at Rome ; and the judge accordingly sent him a prisoner to Rome, and freed the East from a turbulent fellow.

In considering the story of this mob, it is important to keep in view that the first thought of James and the elders in speaking to Paul was to let him know his danger—his great danger ; and the only dangerous persons referred to were “Jews which believe”, who were very “zealous of the law”. There were two kinds of “Jews”—Jews by birth and Jews by faith. The Christians of Greece and Rome generally spoke of the Jewish Christians as “Jews”. The record of the occurrences on the occasion of this visit of Paul to the Holy City shows some interesting facts. *First* : All the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem were zealous observers of the Mosaic ceremonial law. *Secondly* : Christianity in Jerusalem was something very different from Christianity in Antioch. *Thirdly* : The Church at Jerusalem had never justified Paul in disregarding the Mosaic ceremonies. *Fourthly* : The stories, told of the approval of Paul's conduct by the apostles and Church in a general council, are false—straight-up-and-down lies. *Fifthly* : The Jewish Christians at Jerusalem had such a bitter hatred for Paul, that the first thought of James and the elders was to advise him to do something to save himself from their vengeance. *Sixthly* : James and the elders do not hesitate to advise Paul to lie. The ceremony of purification which they recommended, was that of taking the vow of a Nazarete, as described in Chapter VI. of *Numbers*, and as Milman * says, was an “acknowledgment not merely of respect for, but of zeal beyond, the law”. The ceremony required repeated sacrifices and offerings, and implied an oath of zeal for the law beyond the respect and observance necessary from all faithful followers of Moses. Could Paul honestly take such an oath ? *Seventhly* : Paul does not hesitate to lie, to take a solemn oath with four compurgators, that the charges against him were “nothing”, that

* History of Christianity.

he walked "orderly", and kept "the law". *Eighthly*: Paul was never recognized as an orthodox Christian, much less as an apostle by the Christians in Jerusalem.

Paul himself confessed that they would have nothing to do with him. He said that, while he was in the Temple, taking that false and solemn oath, he fell into a trance, "and saw him [Christ] saying unto me, 'Make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me'" [Christ] (*Acts XXII. 18*). "They" were of course Jewish Christians, for Paul could not hope for any body else to believe his testimony of Christ. He could not expect to convert at once the unbelievers who had turned a deaf ear to the legitimate apostles for year after year. In fact, he avowed that his mission was only to the Gentiles. Those Jewish Christians considered Paul an impostor; they would not receive his testimony about his miraculous conversion, the appearance of Christ to him, and the revelation to him of truths beyond those which Jesus taught.

Paul probably thought it would be of no use to deny the manner in which he lied in Jerusalem; he even came out, and avowed his policy of being "all things to all men". "For, though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak, became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the Gospel's sake; that I might be partaker thereof with you" (*1. Cor. IX. 19-23*).

As remarked already, we have only Paul's version of all these different events. The other side we have not; but we know that the writings which have come down to us under the name of Barnabas, do not take sides with the thirteenth apostle. We know also that there is good reason to believe that instead of the Christians at Jerusalem having approved of the course of Paul in teaching the Gen-

tiles, they sent out missionaries to oppose him. A very able and learned German commentator on the New Testament * says, " Embittered at the spread of the Pauline Christians, the Judaizing Christians (probably of Palestine) sent missionaries to those places where Paul had made converts for the purpose of drawing them away from him and his doctrine. At least, without supposing such to have been the fact, we cannot explain several events which occurred in the congregations of Paul, and several passages in his epistles. But on the supposition of such missions, we can explain the sudden abandonment of Paul by congregations which had held to his teaching for years, such as the Galatians and the Corinthians. How could such a change of opinion occur among Gentile Christians so rapidly—a change so contrary to their interests, implying a submission of the males to the painful operation of circumcision—if not by the influence of men high in the Church who taught them that obedience to the Mosaic law was necessary to salvation? The enemies of Paul's teaching sought to increase their importance by representing themselves as the immediate pupils of the apostles in Jerusalem, particularly of Peter, James and John (2. *Cor.* XII. 11. 12. *Gal.* I. II. 1—10). Does not this show that they were Jewish Christians? They travelled with letters of recommendation (2. *Cor.* III. 1. II. 4), and asserted that Paul was no longer as they were, that he broke loose from the Mosaic law only to gain the applause of the Heathen, and that by so doing he corrupted the doctrines of Jesus (*Gal.* I. 10). Does not this show that they were special missionaries? And does not the title of 'apostles', which they claimed for themselves (2. *Cor.* XI. 5, 13—15), remove every doubt?"

"The Epistle" [to the Galatians] says Paley, † "supposes that certain [Christians] designing adherents of the Jewish law had crept into the churches of Galatia; and had been endeavoring but too successfully to persuade the Galatic converts that they had been taught the new religion imperfectly and at second hand; that the founder of their Church himself possessed only an inferior and deputed commission, the seat of truth and authority being in the apos-

* J. G. EICHHORN. Einleitung in das Neue Testament.

† *Heræ Paulinæ.* Chap. V. Sec. 1.

tles and elders of Jerusalem ; moreover that, whatever he might profess amongst them, he had himself in other times, and in other places, given way to the doctrine of circumcision. Referring therefore to this, as to what had actually passed, we find Saint Paul treating so unjust an attempt to undermine his credit, and to introduce amongst his converts a doctrine which he had uniformly reprobated, in terms of great asperity and indignation”.

In writing to the Corinthian Church about the persons who had been endeavoring to lead that congregation away from him, he declared them to be “ false *apostles*, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into *apostles* of Christ”, and he said “ I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest *apostles*”. “ Are they Hebrews ? So am I. Are they Israelites ? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham ? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ ? I am more”. He claims to be as good as any of these false *apostles*”, and enumerates his labors and the sufferings which he had undergone for the sake of his faith, among which were “ ‘perils among false brethren” (2 *Cor.* XI. 5. 13. 22. 23. 26). It does not appear that he kept up any correspondence with the apostles in Jerusalem, or sent, or received any friendly messages to or from them. He makes no reference to the state of affairs there, and if not hostile to the twelve, he appears at least indifferent to their proceedings and their welfare. He never appeals to any Church record, or Gospel of the Jerusalem Church, but orders his converts to read his own Epistles as the only guide to salvation.

And this fellow was St. Paul whose writings are sacred, divinely inspired—St. Paul, who contributed more inspiration to the New Testament than any other man—St. Paul, who set aside the teachings of Jesus—St. Paul, who made Christianity what it is, and laid the foundation of all the Christian Churches now in existence ! This is the mighty man who overthrew the Paganism of Greece and Rome ! This is the inventor of the creed before which Milton, Locke, Newton, and Burke bowed in adoration. This is the man who, if he did not first originate the Christian doctrines of the eternal damnation of all mankind for Adam’s sin, salvation by Jesus, the incarnation and the trinity, was at least the person who firmly engrafted them upon the rising

Church, and thus established them as portions of the creed of Christendom for several thousand years ! Alas, for the follies, vanities, and deceptions of earth !

CHAPTER VI.

DAVID A SCOUNDREL.

“ The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart.”—
1 S. *XIII.* 14.

§ 29. If an all-wise, all-good, and all-powerful personal Governor of the Universe should see fit to teach mankind, and should select men to be his amanuenses, we must suppose that he would select, for that purpose, good men—at least not scoundrels. That is a proposition which Christians will scarcely venture to deny. Now I say that David, the most important character in the Bible, after Moses, Jesus and Paul, and one of its chief authors—was what we should now-a-days call a scoundrel. He was guilty of murder, robbery, and adultery ; he betrayed his friends, inflicted most barbarous punishments on his enemies, gave up his brothers-in-law and sons-in-law to be hanged, when ~~they~~ they had committed no offense, and divorced his wife without good cause. These and similar offenses were committed not once, but often ; not in the heat of passion, but in the coolness of considerate forethought ; not under palliating, but under the most inexcusable circumstances ; besides the doer never repented for them ; never confessed his sins to himself or to his God ; never asked pardon of the injured, of humanity, or of the Deity. On the contrary, he assumed that he was a person of the most exalted merit, boasted that Jehovah had promised the throne of Israel to his descendants forever, and frequently reminded said Jehovah of the promise. I do not know whether such conduct suffices to justify me in calling him a “ scoundrel,” but I rather think it does. Whether he was guilty of such conduct, we shall see presently.

David is properly the hero of the Old Testament. Moses is the great prophet and writer, but David is the great King, the founder of the glory of the nation. Besides he is a prophet of high position—second to none after Moses. Bishop Horne, a writer much respected among orthodox Protestants, speaks as follows of the son of Jesse :—“ His invaluable Psalms convey to others those comforts which they offered to himself. Composed upon particular occasions, yet designed for general use ; delivered out as services for Israelites under the Law, yet no less adapted to the circumstances of Christians under the Gospel ; they present religion to us in the most engaging dress, communicating truths which Philosophy can never investigate, in a style which poetry can never equal. Calculated alike to profit and to please, they inform the understanding, elevate the affections, and entertain the imagination. Indited under the influence of Him to whom all hearts are open, and all events foreknown, they suit mankind in all situations, grateful as the manna which descended from above and conformed itself to every palate. The fairest productions of human wit after a few perusals, like gathered flowers, wither in our hands, and lose their fragrancy ; but these unfading plants of Paradise become, as we are more accustomed to them, still more and more beautiful ; their bloom appears to be daily heightened, fresh odors are emitted and new sweets are extracted from them. He, who has once tasted their excellences, will desire to taste them again ; and he who tastes them oftenest, will relish them best.” “ The inspiration and canonical authority of the Psalms,” says Bishop Kitto,* “ are established by the most abundant and convincing evidence. They never can be rejected except by impious impugnors of all divine revelation. Not to mention other ancient testimonies, we find complete evidence in the New Testament, where the book is quoted and referred to as divine, by Christ and his apostles at least seventy times. No other writing is so frequently cited.* * In every age the Psalms have been extolled for their excellence and their use for godly edifying. Indeed, if Paul’s estimate of the ancient inspired scripture (2. *Tim.* III. 15–17) can be justly applied to

* *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature.*—Article *Psalms*.

any book, that book must be the Psalms." The Rev. Matthew Henry, in his exposition of the Bible, says, the book of *Psalms* is "one of the choicest and most excellent parts of all the Old Testament"—and even "the abstract and summary of both Testaments." Dr. Adam Clarke says even "God himself had created none greater [as a poet than David] either before or since. In this science and gift, he is therefore the *chef d'œuvre* [master-piece] of the Almighty." David was the type of Christ (*Jer.* XXX. 9. *Ezek.* XXXIV. 23. *Hosea* III. 5, etc.) and a man of God (*Neh.* XII. 36). Jehovah himself declared that David had done that which was right in his eyes, keeping his "statutes" and his "judgments" (1 *K.* XI. 33). He promised to Solomon that he would make his dynasty eternal, "provided," says Jehovah "thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee" (1 *K.* IX. 4). Jehovah, though he changed his mind occasionally, continued to have a high opinion of David's piety and virtue, and he declared that David "did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that He commanded him, all the days of life, save only in the matter of Uriah" (1 *K.* XV. 5). All the other transactions of David were perfectly proper; and even that one exception appears to have been forgotten in later years, and Paul declared by inspiration that David was "a man after God's own heart" who fulfilled all his will (*Acts* XIII. 22). This was the man whose blood was necessary for the redemption of mankind, and whose piety was so pure, that Jesus died quoting his words. *Ps.* XXII. 1. XXXI. 5.

§ 30. The history of David, as an adult man, may be said to begin, when he fled from the court of Saul, and took refuge with Achish, the heathen King of Gath, who kindly offered him a place of refuge from the murderous designs of the Hebrew monarch. Having* staid some-time in the capital of King Achish, with his little band of 600 bold adventurers, he was afraid of being burthensome to that prince, and begged he would assign him another

* Most of the following remarks upon David's history and character are taken from the famous article on *David* in Bayle's Dictionary.

habitation. Achish appointed him the city of Ziklag. David removed thither with his followers, and did not suffer their swords to rest in their scabbards. He often led them out on parties, and killed man and woman without mercy ; he left only the cattle alive which was all the booty he returned with ; he was afraid lest prisoners should discover the whole mystery to Achish, for which reason he carried none with him but put both sexes to the sword. The mystery which he would not have discovered was that these ravages were committed not on the lands of the Israelites, as he made the King of Gath believe, but in the lands of the ancient inhabitants of Palestine, (1 S. XXVII. 8-12), the subjects, allies and kin of his protector. To say the truth, this conduct was very unjustifiable ; to cover one fault, he committed a greater. He deceived a King to whom he had obligations ; and to conceal this deception, he exercised extreme cruelty. If David has been asked *By what authority dost thou these things ?* What could he have answered ? Has a private man, as he was, a fugitive who finds shelter in the territories of a neighboring prince, a right to commit hostilities, for his own account, and without a commission from the sovereign of the country ? Had David any such commission ? On the contrary did he not act contrary to the intention and interests of the King of Gath ? It is certain, that if a private person, let his birth be ever so great, should behave at this day as David did on this occasion, he would unavoidably have no very honorable names given to him. I know very well that the most illustrious heroes, and the most famous prophets of the Old Testament, have sometimes approved the destroying all things which had life, with the edge of the sword ; and therefore I should be far from calling what David did inhumanity, if he had been authorized by the orders of any prophet, or if God had himself by inspiration commanded him to act as he did ; but it plainly appears from the silence of the Scripture that he did all this of his own head.

David purchased his first wife Micah with a singular kind of coin, which however, current in those times, would be rejected by the banks in our days, or would be subjected at least to a heavy discount. Saul proposed to sell his

daughter for the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, but David thought she was worth more than that, so he slew two hundred of the heathen, and having circumcised them, presented the amputated parts to the monarch, who was delighted with the gift and gave his daughter willingly for such a valuable contribution to his treasury. David never practised the barbarous custom of "scalping" the enemies whom he killed or took prisoners in war—that was left for the North American savages to practice.

§ 31. I shall say a word concerning what he had determined to do with Nabal. While that man, who was very rich, was shearing his sheep, David sent to ask him very civilly for some gratification ; his messengers failed not to represent that Nabal's shepherds had never received any damage from David's people. As Nabal was very churlish, he asked in a rude manner who David was, and reproached him with having thrown off his master's yoke ; in a word, he declared that he was not such a fool as to give what he had provided for his domestics to strangers and vagabonds. David, enraged at this answer, armed four hundred of his soldiers, and put himself at their head ; fully resolved not to suffer one soul to escape the edge of the sword. He even bound himself to it by an oath ; and if he did not execute this bloody purpose, it was because Abigail came to appease him by fair speeches and presents (1 S. XXV. 18). Abigail was Nabal's wife, and a woman of great merit, beautiful and witty, and she pleased David so well that he married her so soon as she became a widow (1 S. XXV. 43). Let us speak sincerely ; is it not incontestable that David was going to commit a very criminal action ? He had no right to Nabal's goods, nor any authority to punish him for his incivility. He ranged up and down with a band of trusty friends ; he might indeed be allowed to ask some gratification of people who were at their ease ; but if they refused, he ought to have taken it patiently, nor could he compel them to it by military execution, without plunging the world again into the terrible confusion which is called the state of nature, wherein no other law is acknowledged but that of the strongest. What should we say at this day of a Prince of the royal blood of France, who, being disgraced at court, should take refuge where he could, with

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such friends, as should be willing to follow his fortune? What judgment I say should we make of him, if he should take it into his head to raise contributions in the countries where he should canton himself, and to put all to the sword in the villages which should refuse to pay the taxes? What should we say, if this Prince should fit out vessels and cruize at sea to take all the merchant ships he could light on? Sincerely speaking, had David a better authority to exact contributions from Nabal, and to massacre all the men and women in the country of the Amalekites, &c., and to take all the cattle he found there? I agree it may be answered me that we are at this day better acquainted with the Law of Nations, and the rights of war and peace, of which such fine systems have been written; and therefore such behavior was more excusable in those times than it would be now. But the profound respect which we ought to entertain for this great king, this great prophet, ought not to hinder us from disapproving the blemishes which are to be found in his life; otherwise we should give occasion to the profane to reproach us, and to say, it is sufficient to make an action just that it be done by certain persons whom we reverence; than which nothing could be more fatal to Christian morality. It is of great concern to true religion that the lives of the orthodox be judged by the general ideas of right and order.

§ 32. While David with his little flying camp was exterminating the inhabitants of all the infidel countries wherever he could penetrate, the Philistines were making preparations in their dominions for war against the Israelites. They assembled all their forces; and David with his bold adventurers joined the army of Achish, and they would have fought like lions against their brethren, if the distrustful Philistines had not constrained Achish to dismiss them. It was feared lest in the heat of the battle they should fall on the Philistines in order to make their peace with Saul. When David was informed that by reason of these suspicions he would have to quit the army, he was concerned at it, and said unto Achish "What have I done? And what hast thou found in thy servant, so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go to fight against the enemies of my Lord, the King?" (1 S. XXIX

8) He had resolved therefore to contribute with all his might to the victory of the uncircumcised Philistines, over his own brethren, the people of God, and the professors of the true religion. I leave nice casuists to judge whether these were sentiments worthy of a true Israelite.

§ 33. So soon as he heard of Saul's death, he set himself without loss of time to secure the succession. He went to Hebron, and immediately on his arrival there, the whole tribe of Judah, of which he had gained the principal men by bribes, acknowledged him for king. If Abner had not preserved the rest of the succession for Saul's son, there is no doubt but by the same method, I mean by gaining the principal men with presents, David would have become King of all Israel. But what happened, after Abner had preserved eleven whole tribes for Ishbosheth? The same which would have happened between two infidel and most ambitious princes! David and Ishbosheth made incessant war on one another (2 S. III. 1) to try which of the two could get the other's share, in order to enjoy the whole kingdom without division. What I am going to say is a great deal worse. Abner being discontented with the king, his master, resolves to dispossess him of his dominions, and to deliver them up to David; he acquaints David with his intentions, and goes to him to concert measures for putting them in execution. David gives ear to the traitor and is willing to gain a kingdom by intrigues of this nature (2 S. III. 12). Can it be said that these are the actions of a saint? I own that there is nothing in all this but what is agreeable to the precepts of policy, and the methods of human prudence; but I shall never be persuaded that the strict laws of equity, the severe morals of a good servant of God can approve such conduct. Take notice that David did not pretend that Saul's son reigned by usurpation; he confessed that Ishbosheth was a righteous man (2 S. IV. 11), and consequently a lawful king.

§ 34. David's long reign was disturbed only by the criminal attempts of his own children. The most considerable of these disturbances was the revolt of Absalom, who forced this great Prince to fly from Jerusalem in a mournful condition, with his head covered, his feet bare, melting into tears, and his ears saluted by nothing but the groans

of his faithful subjects (2 S. XV. 23). Absalom entered Jerusalem, as it were, in triumph ; and that the zeal of his adherents might not grow cool on an imagination that this quarrel between the father and the son might be made up, he did a thing very proper to persuade them that he would never be reconciled to David. He lay with the ten concubines of that Prince in the sight of all the world (2 S. XVI. 22). It is very probable that this crime would have been forgiven him ; the extreme affliction into which his death threw David is a proof of it. He was the best father that ever was ; his indulgence to his children was excessive, and he himself was the first who suffered by it. For if he had punished the infamous action of his son Ammon, who ravished his sister Tamar, and was slain for the crime by Absalom's order (2 S. XIII. 28) as the thing deserved, he would not have had the shame and displeasure to see another avenge the injury to Tamar ; and if he had chastised him who took that revenge, he would not have run the risk of being absolutely dethroned. David's destiny was the same with that of most great Princes—he was unhappy in his family. His eldest son violated his own sister, and was killed by one of his own brothers for that incest ; and the author of that fratricide lay with his father's concubines in the most public manner. What a scandal must it be to pious souls to see so many infamous actions committed in the family of this king ?

§ 35. David made use of means to defeat the rebellion of Absalom, similar to those by which he had gained the throne. He would not permit Hushai, one of his best friends, to follow him, but ordered him to go over to Absalom's party that he might give ill counsel to that rebellious son, and be able to inform David of all the designs of the new king (2 S. XV. 34). This stratagem, without doubt, is very commendable, if we judge of things according to human prudence, and the policy of sovereigns. It saved David, and from that age to our own inclusively, has produced an infinite number of adventures, useful to some and pernicious to others ; but a rigid moralist will never take this for an action worthy of a prophet, a saint, or an honest man. An honest man, as such, would rather lose a crown, than be the cause of his friend's damnation ; and it is to

damn our friend as much as in us lies, to push him on to commit a crime ; and it is a crime to feign to embrace a man's part with zeal ; to feign it, I say, in order to ruin that man by giving him evil counsel, and revealing all the secrets of his cabinet. Can there be a more treacherous piece of villany than this of Hushai ? So soon as he perceives Absalom, he cries out " God save the king ! God save the king ! " and when he is asked the reason of his ingratitude in not following his intimate friend, he gives himself airs of devotion, and alleges reasons of conscience—" I will be his whom the Lord hath chosen ".

§ 36. David has long been blamed for having committed a crying injustice against Mephibosheth, the son of his intimate friend, Jonathan. The fact is, David, standing no more in fear of Saul's faction, was well pleased to show himself liberal to all those who might yet remain of that family. He was informed that there was left a poor cripple, named Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan. He sent for him, and gave him all the lands which had belonged to King Saul, and ordered Ziba, an old servant of that family, to improve those lands for his benefit, and for the maintenance of Mephibosheth's son ; for as to Mephibosheth, he was to eat at King David's table as long as he lived (2 S. IX. 7). When that Prince fled from Jerusalem, for fear of falling into the hands of Absalom, he met Ziba, who brought him some refreshments, and told him in a few words that Mephibosheth staid at Jerusalem, in hopes that among those revolutions he might recover the kingdom. Whereupon David gave him all that belonged to Mephibosheth (2 S. XVI. 4). After the death of Absalom, he found that Ziba had been a false accuser, and yet he only took from him the half of what he had given him ; and restored to Mephibosheth but one half of his estate. This sin was the greater in David, because he was under great obligations to Jonathan.

§ 37. The most notable of all David's offenses against the dictates of morality was his affair with Bathsheba. After he had conquered all his enemies within the bounds of his own nation, and while his armies were engaged in conquering the Heathen round about Judea, the monarch had opportunity to relax his soul in pleasure after the severe

toils and trials which he had undergone while in exile abroad, or in civil war at home. It happened one eventide that, as he was walking upon the roof of his house, he saw a woman washing herself, and he was decidedly pleased with her appearance, for she was very beautiful to look upon, and beauty lost none of its charms in his eyes by being unadorned. He forthwith sent to inquire who she was, and reply came that she was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, a general in his army of much reputation as a "mighty man of war" (1 *Ch.* XI. 41), against whose valor, faithfulness, and uprightness not a word had ever been breathed. David, however, appears to have cared as little for Uriah's faithfulness as for the sacredness of the marriage-rite, and he sent and took Bathsheba—she making no resistance. At this time David was about forty years of age, so that the Christians cannot plead the hot blood of youth as an excuse for him. Besides, he had half a dozen wives at the time: and for twenty years he had been in the habit of consulting Jehovah on all important occasions—Jehovah answering his petitions invariably. David found so much pleasure in Bathsheba's company that he determined to have Uriah put out of the way; and therefore he sent him with a letter to Joab, the commander-in-chief of the Hebrew army, who was besieging the city of Rabbah, in the land of the Ammonites. This letter is a model for epistolary correspondence, and may be inserted here entire, as follows:

"Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him that he may be smitten and die". 2 *S.* XI. 15.

Joab, like a faithful servant, observed the city well, and assigned a place to Uriah, where he knew the valiant men were. The consequence was that some of the servants of David were slain, and Uriah also. After this affair, the general sent an express to Jerusalem, with news of the progress of events, instructing the messenger that, if the king should be angry at the death of his servants, he should add that Uriah was dead also. The messenger, however, told the whole story at once, so that David had no time to get angry, before hearing of the death of the troublesome husband. The king put on a long face, and told the messenger to comfort Joab for the loss: "Let not this thing displease thee for the sword devoureth one as well as an-

other. *Make thy battle more strong* " etc. (2 S. XI. 25.) Having the field now entirely to himself, the monarch took the widow to wife, and she became the mother of Solomon, and the ancestress of Jesus, that is if the latter was descended from David. A child was begotten in adultery previous to the death of Uriah.

§ 38. His polygamy cannot well be excused, for though God tolerated the practice in those days, we must not think it might be carried very far, without loosing the reins too much to sensuality. Michal, Saul's second daughter, was David's first wife ; she was taken from him during his disgrace (1 S. XXV. 44 ;) he successively married several others (2 S. III. 5), and yet demanded the first again. To restore her to him they were obliged to force her from a husband who loved her greatly ; and who followed her as far as he could, weeping like a child (2 S. III. 16). "The possession* of such a wife was valuable to one who was aspiring to the kingdom. Accordingly, the unhappy Michal was torn away from a most affectionate husband, and passed over into the increasing harem of a man, to whom in his earliest youth, she had been a virgin bride ; but who now cared not for *her*, but for her *name* and its political uses. It is not wonderful that she could not adapt herself to her new lord, and that as soon as he was firm in the kingdom, he disgraced her". David made no scruple to ally himself with the daughter of the uncircumcised king of Geshur (2 Sam. III. 3) ; and though he had children by several wives, he took concubines at Jerusalem. He chose, without doubt the handsomest he could meet with ; so that it cannot be said that he took much pains to mortify nature with respect to the pleasures of love.

§ 39. Michal reproached David on account of the garb he put himself into when he danced in public. If he had discovered his nakedness, his action might be deemed ill, morally speaking ; but if he did no more than make himself contemptible by his postures, and by not keeping up the majesty of his character, it was but an imprudence at most, and not a serious moral offense. It ought to be well considered on what occasion it was that he danced ; it was when the Ark was carried to Jerusalem

* BISHOP KITTO'S Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature.

(2 S. VI. 14) ; and consequently the excess of his joy and of his leaping testified his attachment and his sensibility for holy things. Michal, from a window, saw her husband transported with a holy fervor, dancing and capering before the Ark of the Lord ; and despising him, in her heart, she said to him when they met “How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself”. From these words it seems that David had stripped himself stark naked, yet at the same text (v. 14), speaking of David’s dancing before the Ark, it says he was girded with a linen ephod, which as Calmet says was a kind of sash. But he stripped so as to appear as it were, naked, and to make his behavior judged unworthy the gravity and majesty of a king ; and the more so, since the thing was done publicly and before a great multitude. It would be thought very strange in any part of Europe, if on a day of national rejoicing, the kings should dance in the streets with nothing but a small girdle on their bodies.

§ 40. And for this deserved reproach he not only repudiated his wife, to whom he was bound by many ties of obligation, she having loved him while she was the daughter of the reigning king, and while he was a poor adventurer—he not only repudiated her, but he gave up two of her brothers and five of her sons to be hung—to be hung without cause, (see Sect. 11.) and they were his brothers-in-law and step-sons. It is true that he had a motive for consenting that they should be murdered, “since* it was desirable for the peace of his successors that the house of Saul should be exterminated”.

§ 41. The conquests of David deserve a few observations. There are some rigid moralists who do not think that a Christian prince can lawfully engage in war, merely out of a desire to aggrandize himself. These moralists approve of none but of defensive wars, or, in general, those which only tend to get every man restored to the possessions which belong to him. If this maxim be correct, many of David’s wars were unjust ; for besides that the Scripture often represents him as the aggressor, we find

* BISHOP KITTO’S Cyclopædia. Article *David*.

that he extended the bounds of his empire from Egypt to the Euphrates. That we may not condemn David therefore, we had better say that conquests may sometimes be permitted ; and that consequently care should be taken lest in declaring against modern Princes, our censures fall unawares on that great prophet.

But, if generally speaking, the conquests of that holy Monarch have raised his glory without prejudice to his justice, it will be difficult to maintain this proposition when we enter into particulars. Let us not by our conjectures try to pry into secrets which history has not revealed to us ; let us not conclude that since David was willing to take advantage of the treason of Abner and Hushai, he therefore stuck not to make use of stratagems of almost every kind against the Pagan kings whom he subdued. Let us confine ourselves to what the sacred history has told us of the manner wherein he treated the vanquished. " He also brought the people that were in Rabbah [chief city of the Ammonites], and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln ; and thus he did unto the eities of the children of Ammon" (2 S. XIII. 31). The Geneva Bible observes in the margin of this verse, that " these were different ways of putting people to death which were anciently practised". Let us see how he treated the Moabites ; " he measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground ; even with two lines measured he put to death, and with one full line to keep alive" (2 S. VIII. 2). That is to say, he determined to put to death precisely two-thirds of them, neither more nor less. Edom received a yet harsher treatment ; he there slew all the males ; " six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom" (1 K. XI. 16). Can this method of making war be denied to be blameworthy ? Have not the Turks and Tartars a little more humanity ? And if a vast number of books daily complain of the military executions of our own time, which are really cruel and highly to be blamed, though mild in comparison with David's, what would not the authors of those books say, had they such usage to censure as the saws, the harrows, and the brick-kilns of David, and the general slaughter of all the males, old and young ?

§ 42. When David, by reason of his great age, could not get heat under all the clothes, with which they covered him, it came into their heads to seek for a young girl to nurse him. He suffered them to bring to him, for that purpose the most beautiful maiden that could be found (1. K. I. 4.). Can this be said to be the action of a very chaste man? Will a man who is filled with the ideas of purity and perfectly resolved to do what decency and strict morality require of him, ever consent to these remedies? Can a man consent to them, unless he prefers the instincts of nature, and the interests of the flesh before those of God's spirit?

§ 43. The same passions which appear to have ruled David during his life, were strong when he was on the bed of death. He died in bed and in peace, with full knowledge of his approaching dissolution, and abundant time to prepare for it. When he could retain the sceptre no longer he called Solomon, the heir of the throne, and gave him the crown with such advice, as he supposed was fitting, in an experienced monarch, and an inspired prophet, to a young and inexperienced man, about to take charge of a great kingdom. I shall quote his words here, in full, as it may perhaps be considered a proper piece of advice for all young monarchs, and perhaps for all young men about to commence life for themselves, and a good example for all old sinners about to die:—

“I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man. And keep the charge of the Lord, thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayst prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: *that* the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying ‘If thy children take heed to their way to walk before me in truth, with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel’. Moreover thou knowest what Joab, the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the host of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa, the son of Jether, whom he slew and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and *let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.* But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be

of those that eat at thy table ; for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother. And behold thou hast with thee Shimei, the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim ; but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the Lord, saying ‘ I will not put thee to death with the sword.’ Now therefore hold him not guiltless ; for thou art a wise man and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him ; *but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood*”. 1. K. II. 2-9.

Is this the manner in which “ a man of God ” should die ? Not a word of his sins ! Not a word of a future life ! Not a word of Jehovah, except as the giver of sordid wealth and power and honor ! Not a word of his people ! Not a word of prayer for his own soul ! No, he dies cursing his fellowmen ! False to his oath, he orders his son to do, what he had promised not to do ! He orders the murder of those whom he had promised not to kill ! Let Christians consider fully the deeds of this “ man after God’s own heart”, admire his character, and go and name their children after him.

§ 44. From all that has been said in the preceding remarks, it may easily be inferred that if the people of Syria had been as great writers of libels as the American editors of political newspapers in the present day, they would have strangely disfigured David’s glory. With what infamous names and titles would they not have loaded that troop of adventurers, who went to join him after he left Saul’s court ? The Scriptures inform us that all who were persecuted by their creditors, all the discontented and all who were in bad circumstances, repaired to him, and that he became their captain (1. S. XXII. 2). Nothing is capable of being more maliciously misrepresented than a thing of this kind. Those who have written of Cataline, and of Walker, would furnish a satirical painter with a great many colors. History has preserved a small specimen of the abuses to which David was exposed among the friends of Saul. This specimen shows that they accused him of being a man of blood, and looked on the rebellion of Absalom as a just punishment for the mischiefs which they said David had done to Saul and his whole family. Shimei cursed him as follows :

“ Come out, come out ! thou bloody man, and thou man of Be-

lial : the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned, and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom, thy son ; and behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man". 2. S. XVI. 7. 8.

They who may think it strange that I should speak my opinion of certain actions of David, as compared with the standard of natural morality, are desired to consider two things. *First*, that they are themselves obliged to confess that this Prince's behavior towards Uriah was one of the greatest crimes that can be committed. There is therefore no other difference between us than with regard to the number of his faults : for I acknowledge, as well as they, that the failings of this prophet are no argument, against his having been a man full of piety and extraordinary zeal for the glory of the Lord. He was subject to the alternatives of passions and grace : a fatality adhering to our nature ever since the sin of Adam. The grace of God guided him often, but in several instances his passions got the upper hand. *Secondly*, that great injury would be done to the eternal laws, and consequently to true religion also, if a handle were given to Infidels to object to us that so soon as a man has a share in the inspirations of God, we look on his conduct as the rule of manners ; so that we dare not condemn those actions which are diametrically opposite to human notions of equity, when it is he who has committed them. There is no possibility of compromise : either these are unworthy actions, or actions like these are not wicked. Now as we must necessarily choose one or the other of these two propositions, is it not better to consult the interest of morality, rather than the glory of a particular person ? Otherwise should we not declare that we would rather prejudice the honor of God than that of a mortal man ?

Such is the character of the man who is held up to us as a man proper to be gifted with royal powers, with divine inspiration—a man “after God's own heart”—the only man to whom such high praise was ever given—the man who was the dearest to Jehovah of all the descendants of Adam. If such men be saved, who will be damned ?

CHAPTER VII.

REBELLIOUSNESS OF GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE.

"Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation".—JEHOVAH.

"It profited the Jews little to be God's people ; if they had been the devil's, they could not have been more wicked or miserable".—VOLTARE.

§ 45. The Bible informs us that Jehovah selected the Jews to be his peculiar people, to whom he was a God, whom he took under his especial charge to the entire neglect of all other nations, whom he provided with spiritual guides and temporal rulers, to whom he gave written rules for their religious, political, social and moral government, among whom he made his home, in whose sight he frequently manifested himself in the most wonderful miracles, and who nevertheless were almost continually in rebellion against him. * Subjoined is a list of the chief miracles done before Israel, and the chief rebellions of that people against Jehovah from the time of Moses, 1500 B. C. to 600 B. C., when they were conquered and carried into captivity by the King of Babylon. The reader will please to remember, while reading, that he has before him an abstract, not made from a story in Baron Munchausen, or the Arabian Nights, but from the "Word of God", as Jesus called it.

The Jews believed the miracles and first claims to divine authority made by Moses and Aaron, who sought to rid their tribe from the yoke of the Egyptians. *Ex. IV. 50, 31.*

Jehovah renewed his promise of favor to Israel. *Ex. VI. 4.*

He turned the waters of Egypt to blood. *Ex. VII. 19.*

* I trust that no one will understand my language, in this chapter or elsewhere, as countenancing the vulgar prejudices against the blood or faith of the modern Jews. If I can strike Christianity through ancient Judaism I feel bound to do so: but I wish that all Christendom may soon feel toward the race, the sentiments expressed by Lessing in *Nathan der Weise*. I know many of them to be enlightened, liberal-minded, good men, and feel honored by their friendship.

He covered the land with frogs. *Ex. VIII. 6.*

He turned the dust into lice. *Ex. VIII. 16.*

He filled the land with flies. *Ex. VIII. 24.*

He slew all the cattle of Egypt. *Ex. IX. 6.*

He covered the Egyptians with boils. *Ex. IX. 10.*

He sent a fiery hail upon Egypt. *Ex. XI. 24.*

He filled Egypt with locusts. *Ex. X. 13.*

He covered Egypt with a deep darkness. *Ex. X. 22.*

He slew the first-born of every Egyptian family. *Ex. XII. 30.*

The Israelites murmured. *Ex. XIV. 10.*

Jehovah sent clouds by day, and pillars of fire by night, to guide the Jews through the wilderness. *Ex. XIV. 20.*

Passage of the Red Sea with a great miracle. *Ex. XIV. 21.*

The Israelites murmured. *Ex. XV. 24.*

Waters of Marah miraculously sweetened. *Ex. XV. 25.*

"The whole congregation of the children of Israel" expressed their regret that they had not died in Egypt by God's hand. *Ex. XVI. 3.*

Quails and Manna foretold and sent by miracle. *Ex. XVI. 4-14.*

The Israelites disobeyed Moses. *Ex. XVI. 20, 27.*

The Israelites murmured. (*Ex. XVII. 1*). This was the fifth rebellion of the Jews against Moses within the short space of three months (*Ex. XIX. 1*), after leaving Egypt, and after having witnessed during that time the great miracles recorded above. And all these rebellions were without any reasonable pretext, so far as we can learn from the Scripture.

Water furnished to the Jews by miracle. *Ex. XVII. 6.*

The Jews conquered the Amalekites by the aid of a great miracle. *Ex. XVII. 11, 12.*

Jehovah sent a message to the Jews, and they promised to obey. *Ex. XIX. 8.*

Jehovah descended upon Sinai in fire and smoke. *Ex. XIX. 16-18.*

The Jews saw, scared, stood afar off and begged Moses "let not God speak to us lest we die". *Ex. XX. 18, 19.*

All the Jews promised obedience to all the ordinances of God. *Ex. XXIV. 3.*

The Glory of the Lord dwelt six days on Mount Sinai, and the sight of it was like a devouring fire in the eyes of the Hebrews. *Ex. XXIV. 16.*

Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abisha, seventy elders, and the nobles of Israel "saw" God. *Ex. XXIV. 10, 11.*

While Moses was upon the Mount, the Israelites induced Aaron, (previously consecrated as high priest of Jehovah), to make the Golden Calf, which they worshipped. *Ex. XXXII. 1-4.*

"The Lord plagued the people because they made the calf which Aaron made". *Ex. XXXII. 35.*

Jehovah appeared in a cloud at the Tabernacle door, and the Hebrews "every man at his tent door", worshipped. *Ex. XXXIII. 10.*

The Israelites willingly brought offerings to the Lord. *Ex. XXXV. 20 ; XXXVI. 5.*

They did all that the Lord commanded to Moses. *Ex. XXXIX. 32, 42, 43.*

The cloud of the Lord by day, and his fire by night rested upon the Tabernacle in the sight of all the house of Israel. *Ex. XL. 38.*

The Glory of the Lord appeared to all the people ; and a fire came from before the Lord and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat ; and all the people saw and shouted and fell on their faces. *Lev. IX. 23, 24.*

The Israelites murmured. *Num. XI. 1-6.*

They lamented that they had not died in Egypt, and they proposed to return. *Num. XIV. 2-4.*

Jehovah was exceedingly provoked, and his Glory appeared on the Tabernacle before all the children of Israel. *Num. XIV. 10, 11.*

Jehovah slew all who spake evil of the promised land. *Num. XIV. 36.*

Two hundred and fifty princes of Israel, and the tribe of Korah rebelled against Moses and Aaron. *Num. XVI. 1-3.*

The next day, in the sight of all Israel, Moses and Aaron had a conference with the rebels, and Moses prayed that the rebels might be swallowed up by the earth. And forthwith "the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained

unto Korah": and the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense, were consumed by fire from heaven. *Num. XVI. 30-35.*

The next day the Jews murmured against Moses and Aaron for slaying the people of the Lord. [!] *Num. XVI. 41.*

A cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the Glory of the Lord appeared. *Num. XVI. 42.*

Jehovah slew 14,700 of the murmuring Jews. *Num. XVI. 49.*

Every Israelite prepared a rod with his name upon it, and Aaron's rod was miraculously exalted above all; and the people thereupon appealed to Moses and Aaron to be protected from death. *Num. XVII. 1-13.*

The Israelites murmured and lamented that they had not died in Egypt. *Num. XX. 2-5.*

The Glory of the Lord appeared to them. *Num. XX. 6.*

Moses brought water from the rock at Meribah by miracle. *Num. XX. 7.*

The Jews became discouraged and murmured against Jehovah and Moses, and exclaimed, "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of the land of Egypt to die in the wilderness." *Num. XXI. 4, 5.*

Jehovah plagued them with fiery serpents, and many died. *Num. XXI. 6.*

Moses made a brazen serpent and hoisted it upon a pole, and all the wounded who looked upon it were healed. *Num. XXI. 9.*

Israel committed idolatry and whoredom. *Num. XXV. 1, 2.*

Jehovah slew 24,000 Jews in a plague for their sins. *Num. XXV. 9.*

"From the day", said Jehovah, when the Jews had arrived near the Jordan "that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord." *Deut. IX. 7.*

The Jews offered no sacrifices, but worshipped Chium and Moloch all the time they were in the wilderness. *Amos V. 25.*

"Israel served the Lord all the days [40 years] of

Joshua" (*Josh. XXIV. 31*). This is singular if considered in connection with the fact that they were in almost constant rebellion against Jehovah before, and very soon after the reign of Joshua. What special influence was there in Joshua to command the obedience which Moses failed to secure? The miracles done by the latter were much more numerous and quite as great as those of the latter; and he was evidently much more in the confidence of Jehovah.

After the death of Joshua, Israel asked Jehovah who should lead them against the Canaanites. *Jud. I. 1.*

The next generation "knew not the Lord nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." And they served Baal and other gods. *Jud. II. 10—12.*

Jehovah "delivered them into the hands of the spoiler." *Jud. II. 14.*

"The children of Israel cried unto the Lord. *Jud. III. 9.*

Then the Lord raised up a deliverer to them, Othniel. *Jud. III. 9.*

"The children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord." *Jud. III. 12.*

"Jehovah gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel." *Jud. III. 13.*

"The children of Israel cried unto the Lord." *Jud. III. 15.*

"The Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera," an assassin. *Jud. III. 15.*

"And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, when Ehud was dead." *Jud. IV. 1.*

"And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, King of Canaan." *Jud. IV. 2.*

"And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord." *Jud. IV. 3.*

"God subdued Jabin," by inducing Jael to assassinate Sisera, the general of Jabin's army. *Jud. IV. 23.*

"The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord." *Jud. VI. 1.* •

"The Lord delivered them into the hands of Midian for seven years." *Jud. VI. 1.*

"The children of Israel cried unto the Lord." *Jud. VI. 6.*

Jehovah raised up Gideon to liberate them. *Jud. VI. 11, VIII. 28.*

“And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again and went a-whoring after Baalim.” *Jud. VIII. 33.*

“And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord and served him not.” *Jud. X. 6.*

“And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines.” *Jud. X. 7.*

“And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.” *Jud. X. 10.*

Jehovah said, “I will deliver you no more ; go and cry unto the gods whom ye have chosen ; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.” *Jud. X. 10.*

The children of Israel cried again unto Jehovah, and put away the strange gods and served the Lord. *Jud. X. 15, 16.*

Jehovah raised up Jephthah to deliver them. *Jud. XI. 29, 32.*

“And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.” *Jud. XIII. 1.*

“And the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years.” *Jud. XIII. 1.*

When Samuel arose as a prophet he found the people given over completely to idolatry. The Philistines had possession of Jehovah's ark, in which the Mosaic law was kept (1 S. VII. 2). By Samuel's advice the Jews were led to worship Jehovah once more. “Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth and served the Lord only.” 1 S. VII. 4.

During the administrations of Samuel, Saul and David, so far as can be learned from the Scripture, the Jews were unusually true to Jehovah.

Solomon was idolatrous in his old age, and he led the Jews to worship Ashtaroth, the Goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh, the God of the Moabites, and Milcom, the God of the children of Ammon. 1 K. XI. 4-9. 33.

After the death of Solomon, ten of the twelve Jewish tribes, (five-sixths of the whole nation) revolted from the legitimate King Rehoboam, established the kingdom of "Israel" or Samaria, and finally deserted the Mosaic law entirely and forever : while the two tribes of Judah and Levi, remained true to Rehoboam, held Jerusalem as their capital and did not entirely desert Jehovah. These two tribes were known as "Judah" in contradistinction to the revolted "Israel." It is only with Judah that we have hereafter to do.

Rehoboam reigned seventeen years, and in his reign Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. "For they also built them high places [where idolatrous and obscene rites were practised] and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were also Sodomites in the land ; and they did according to all the abominations of the nations, which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel" (1 K. XIV. 22-24). The whole nation "forsook the law of the Lord". 2 Ch. XII. 1.

Abijam, the son of Rehoboam reigned three years and "walked in all the sins of his father" 1 K. XV. 2. 3.

Asa, his son, reigned forty-one years and "did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord" "but the high places were not removed". 1 K. XV. 10. 11. 14.

Jehosaphat, son of Asa, reigned twenty five years "and he turned not aside from doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, nevertheless the high places were not taken away ; for the people offered and burned incense yet in the high places". 1 K. XXII. 42. 43.

Jehoram, the son of Jehosaphat, reigned eight years and "did evil in the sight of the Lord". 2 K. VIII. 17. 18.

Ahaziah, son of Jehoram, reigned one year and "did evil in the sight of the Lord". 2 K. VIII. 27.

Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, reigned six years and did evil, and there were temples and priests of Baal in Jerusalem. 2 K. XI. 3. 18.

Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, reigned forty years, and "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord", "but the

high places were not taken away : the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places". 2 K. XII. 2. 3.

Amaziah, son of Joash, reigned twenty nine years ; and "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord", "howbeit the high places were not taken away : as yet the people did sacrifice and burned incense on the high places" (2 K. XIV. 2. 3. 4). The writer of *Chronicles*, however, asserts that Amaziah, in the latter part of his reign, chose "the gods of the children of Seir" to be his gods, and worshipped them, and offered incense before them. 2 Ch. XXV. 14.

Azariah, son of Amaziah, reigned fifty two years, "and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord", "save that the high places were not removed ; the people sacrificed and burned incense still on the high places". 2 K. XV. 2. 3. 4.

Jotham, son of Azariah, reigned sixteen years, and "he did that which was right, in the sight of the Lord", "howbeit the high places were not removed ; the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places". 2 K. XV. 33-35.

Ahaz, the son of Jotham, reigned sixteen years, and was wicked, "and sacrificed and burned his son, and burned incense in the high places, and on the hills and under every green tree". 2 K. XVI. 2-4.

"Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked according to the abominable and idolatrous statutes of the ten tribes, who worshipped images of calves, and all the host of heaven, and served Baal". 2 K. XVII. 14-19.

Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, reigned twenty-nine years, and was pious. "He removed the high places, and broke the images, and cut down the groves, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made ; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it". 2 K. XVIII. 2-4.

Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem, and he was very wicked. He built up again the high places, reared altars for Baal, worshipped all the host of Heaven, built altars for the host of Heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord, made his son pass

through the fire, used enchantments, dealt with familiar spirits and with wizards, wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger, and seduced the Jews to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel (2 K. XXI. 1—9.) It is a very singular matter that Jehovah should have submitted without resistance to such insults offered to him in his own house, after having been so prompt to vindicate his honor by overthrowing the Idol of Dagon, when the Philistines had put his ark in their temple (1. S. V. 3). But the ways of Jehovah are inscrutable!

Jehovah declares that the Jews “have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hands of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to their enemies”. 2 K. XXI. 15. 14.

Amon, son of Manasseh, reigned two years, and was very wicked and idolatrous. 2 K. XXII. 20. 22.

Josiah, son of Amon, reigned thirty-one years, and was very pious. At his order the priests brought forth “out of the Temple of the Lord, all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the Grove, and for all the host of Heaven”, and “he put down the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah”, and he defiled Topheth, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Moloch (2 K. XXII. 1. 2. XXIII. 4—24). It was a custom then with the Jews of Jerusalem, to offer their sons and daughters as burned sacrifices, and if it was the custom in the capital, it is but reasonable to presume that the same custom prevailed throughout Judea.

Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, reigned three months and did evil. 2 K. XXIII. 31. 32.

Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, reigned eleven years and was very wicked. 2 K. XXIII. 36. 37.

Jehovah said to Ezekiel, that the priests had violated the law, and profaned his holy things, and the princes and the people were full of wickedness, and that he, Jehovah, had sought for a man among them, that should make a

hedge and stand in the gap before him in the land, that he should not destroy it, but he found none (*Ezek. XXII. 26. 30*). There was not one good man in the whole country—not one after Jehovah's scanty notion of goodness.

Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, reigned three months and was idolatrous. *2 K. XXIV. 9.*

Zedekiah, son of Josiah, reigned eleven years and was idolatrous. *2 K. XXIV. 19.*

"Moreover [during the reign of Zedekiah] all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem". *2 Ch. XXXVI. 14.*

"They caused to pass through the fire all that opened the womb". (*Ezek. XX. 26.*) That is, they offered all their first-born children as sacrifices to the heathen gods.

The Sabbath had not been observed by the Jews for five hundred years. *2 Ch. XXXVI. 21.*

"As I live, saith the Lord, Sodom, thy sister had not done, she nor her daughter [Gomorrhah] as thou [Jerusalem] has done, thou and thy daughters" [the towns of Judea] (*Ezek. XVI. 48*). To understand the force of this description of the wickedness of Jerusalem, the reader should turn to Chapter XIX of *Genesis* and see how wicked Sodom was. The latter city had not ten "righteous" persons in it. There were four persons in it, however, who were saved by Jehovah, and the righteousness of these four may be judged of from the facts that he slew one of them in his indignation within a few hours, after the party left the city, and the other three committed incest. If these were righteous, what must the wicked have been. Wanted—somebody with a lively imagination to describe the wickedness of Jerusalem.

"There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land". *Hos. IV. 1.*

We have thus traced the general relation of the "Jewish people" to their protecting divinity under every administration from the time of Moses, down to that of the Babylonian captivity—a period of nearly nine hundred years, if the commonly received chronology be correct. We have seen that during nearly the whole of this period, the

people adored the gods of the heathens, worshipped idols, practised their religious rites in groves, with the obscenities which accompanied the grove-rites of the Phœnicians and Syrians, and sought to obtain the favor of the Gods by offering children as burnt-sacrifices. Very soon after the nation had been established by David, and the religious worship by Solomon, in a temple dedicated to the Lord, five-sixths of the people revolted, and became idolaters, deserting Jehovah forever. The other one-sixth continued nominally to be God's people, but in the long list of monarchs from Rehoboam down to Zedekiah, there were only three reigns unstained by idolatry. During the whole of this period, so far, as we can see, the people were in no respect morally superior to the heathens about them. It is sad, indeed, to think that so many inspired prophets, filled with the wisdom of Jehovah, and supported by all his omnipotent power, as well as by all the political influence of some of the monarchs, had no more influence to render God's favorite nation moral, pure, and enlightened. If the philosopher at this day does not succeed immediately in all his schemes of elevating the people and delivering them from the yoke of religious, political, and social tyranny, let him take courage by the comparison of his own progress as compared with that made by David, Solomon, Jeremiah, and others of ancient times, who were backed in their labors by the almighty gods, and yet did not succeed in their purposes.

We have seen that the Jews under the first Temple (from 1000 B. C. till 600 B. C.) paid little regard to the Mosaic decrees concerning the worship of Jehovah. In fact, there is some doubt whether they knew what those decrees were. Moses had commanded that the book of the Law should be kept in the Ark (*Deut. XXXI. 24-26*), but it is not easily to be understood how the Ark and the Law were preserved, while the whole nation was repeatedly enslaved by the Philistines. At one time the heathen had the Ark of the Lord in their possession for seven months, having taken it in fair fight (*1 S. VI. 1*). During all these troubles, we have no information about the Law, of which the writers appear to have known or cared nothing. When Solomon placed the Ark in the Temple, there was

nothing in it save the two tables of stone—the Law being nobody knows where (1. *K. VIII.* 9). At last, however, a copy of the Law was found in the reign of king Josiah, four hundred years after the time of Solomon (2 *K. XXII.* 8.—*XXIII.* 24). When the Law was read to the monarch, he was wonderfully astonished at its contents, for during the eighteen years (2 *K. XXII.* 3) that he had been reigning, he had never heard of this book, nor had he any idea of the Jehovah whose worship was prescribed by Moses ; but, under the influence of Hilkiyah, the priest, he determined to make amends, if possible, for sins of the past by the piety of the future. Accordingly, he removed from the Temple the vessels used in the worship of Baal, he put down the idolatrous priests, he removed the idols (translated “grove” in the English Bible) from the Temple, he broke down the houses of the Sodomites which adjoined that holy building, he defiled the place where the people had been in the habit of sacrificing their children, and slew all the priests of the high places upon the altars. Previous to Josiah, Amon had reigned for two years, and before him Manasseh was king for fifty-five years, and both were very wicked, ignorant, or neglectful of Jehovah, giving themselves up to all the idolatries of the heathens, and leading “the Jews to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord destroyed” before them. Adding the fifty-seven years of these two monarchs to the eighteen idolatrous years of Josiah, we have seventy-five years during which the people knew nothing of the Law, and even the High Priest discovered its existence by mere accident. Soon after the death of Josiah, the Jews were conquered, their temple was destroyed, their worship was prohibited, all the principal men were carried to Babylon as slaves, and the remainder were left in Judea under Babylonian rulers. After seventy years the captivity ended ; some of the Babylonian captives returned, and a sort of Jewish nationality was established, but it was a sickly affair, and was soon destroyed, never to be reestablished. The Mosaic religion, however, now began to bloom ; the priests asserted that the Mosaic law had been the guide of their forefathers for a thousand years, and that the prosperity of the nation depended upon their faithfulness to it : and since that time they have been

faithful to it as no other people ever were or can be faithful to a creed. We remark, however, that their fidelity to Jehovah did not begin until he had ceased to give them prophets, miracles, inspired writings and temporal prosperity. "The devout* and even scrupulous attachment to the Mosaic religion, so conspicuous among the Jews who lived under the second Temple, [from 535 B. C. to 60 A. D.] becomes still more surprising if it is compared with the stubborn incredulity of their forefathers. When the law was given on Mount Sinai, when the tides of the ocean and the courses of the planets were suspended for the convenience of the Israelites, and when temporal rewards and punishments were the immediate consequences of their piety and disobedience, they perpetually relapsed into rebellion against the visible majesty of their divine king, placed the idols of the nations in the sanctuary of Jehovah, and imitated every fantastic ceremony that was practised in the tents of the Arabs or in the cities of Phœnicia. The contemporaries of Moses and Joshua had beheld with careless indifference the most amazing miracles. Under the pressure of every calamity, the belief of those miracles has preserved the Jews of a later period from the universal contagion of idolatry ; and in contradiction to every known principle of the human mind, that singular people seems to have yielded a stronger and more ready assent to the traditions of their remote ancestors than to the evidence of their own senses".

* GIBBON. Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

CHAPTER VIII.

BIBLICAL SUPERSTITIONS.

"Ghosts prudently withdraw at peep of day."—*English Proverb.*

§ 46. The Bible, as I maintain, adopts and sanctions various superstitious notions, which were common among the ancient Jews, and which are rejected by the enlightenment of this age. For their rejection we owe no thanks to "The Word of God", but much to science and skeptical philosophy. What is superstition? I have selected some of the definitions from our latest and best English dictionaries as follows:—

"Belief without evidence." *Webster.*

"Belief in the direct agency of superior powers in certain extraordinary or singular events, or in omens and prognostications." *Webster.*

"The habit or act of ascribing to the direct or special agency of supernatural power, results which can be proved to proceed from secondary causes." *Worcester.*

"The word [superstition] is also extended to those who believe in witchcraft, magic, and apparitions, or that the divine will is declared by omens or augury, that the fortune of individuals can be affected by things indifferent, by things deemed lucky or unlucky, or that diseases can be cured by words, charms, or incantations." *Ogilvie.*

"When a man," says Parker, "fears God more than he loves him; when he will forsake reason, conscience, love,—the still small voice of God in the heart, for any of the legion voices of authority, tradition, expediency, which come of ignorance, selfishness and sin; whenever he hopes by a poor prayer, or a listless attendance at church, or an austere observance of Sabbath and Fast-days: when he hopes by professing with his tongue the doctrine he cannot believe in his heart, to atone for wicked actions, wrong thoughts, unholy feelings, a six-days' life of meanness, de-

ception, rottenness and sin,—then he is superstitious.” I do not mean to say that in this chapter I have mentioned all the superstitious ideas, adopted as true by the authors of the Bible, but only a small proportion of the more important ones. In the subject of this chapter, as in that of every other of this book, the Biblical doctrines might furnish matter for much more extensive comment.

§ 47. *The Bible teaches the existence of a personal Devil.* Job says (I. 6. 7.) “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, ‘Whence comest thou?’ Then Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.’” This divinely inspired book proceeds to relate in all apparent seriousness, how the two agreed that the Prince of Darkness should smite Job, a good man, with misfortune, and try whether he could not be induced to curse his maker. The two had several consultations on the subject, and appeared to separate in a very friendly manner, all things considered. The Gospel nowhere intimates that there is anything except the literal truth in this book; and any figurative interpretation, placed upon the language, would be entirely without excuse. The only reason for disbelief of the plain meaning is its absurdity; but that absurdity would not justify the adoption of a different meaning.

Matthew (IV. 1—11), Mark (I. 12) and Luke (IV. 1—13) relate that Jesus, before beginning to preach, was “led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil.” Matthew and Luke report the literal conversation between the two august parties. Satan showed to Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world”, (it was from the top of an *exceeding* high mountain), and offered them in consideration of his worship. If Satan had been sensible he might have known that he could not induce such a nice young man as Jesus to do anything so naughty. Jesus like a well-bred youth quoted Scripture at him; and Satan quoted Scripture back again, to show that he had had a religious education. Satan also took Jesus, the latter apparently making no objection, to a pinnacle of the Temple in the “holy city” (for Jerusalem was very holy in that

age, even to the Evangelists, little as the degenerate Christians of this age care about it), and from that pinnacle his Satanic Majesty politely invited his companion to cast himself down ; and Jesus as politely begged to be excused, with another quotation from the Scripture. Finally "the Devil leaveth him" up on the pinnacle, the curtain fell on that scene, and Jesus clambered down from his elevated position, the best way he could. There was no possibility of mistake about the person in this case ; it was the Devil, and no mistake. Jesus, after having made his acquaintance, and knowing him to be a gentlemanly fellow usually spoke of him as "the prince of *this* world." *John XII. 31.*

Jude, in his Epistle teaches Christians to be very kind in their manners toward all the world, and never to speak harshly to others. He calls their attention to a very high example, and says "Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke thee.'" Of course, Jude would not lie ; and yet his account of Michael and Satan, must be either literal truth or a lie. Christians can take their choice.

It requires no argument to show that the belief in a personal Devil (in addition to belief in a good divinity) is inconsistent with monotheism. The Devil can be nothing more or less than an evil god ; and thus there are two gods, instead of one. For this reason it is that the enlightened Christians refuse to believe in a personal Satan, and assert that faith in him is not taught in their Bible. According to them "Satan" of the Scriptures is nothing more, than a personification of evil ; but they might as well assert that Jesus was only a personification of good. The Christians must presume that, when Jehovah was dictating the Bible, he knew what effect the language would have upon its readers, and intended to produce that effect. Now the passages where Satan is mentioned, led all Christendom to believe in a personal devil for eighteen centuries ; either Jehovah did not intend that the language should have any peculiar effect, or it has not had the effect which he intended, or there is a personal Devil.

I shall endeavor to fortify my position that the dogma of a personal devil is a part of Christianity, with some passages from Robert Hall, one of the ablest of Christian orators.

“The attentive reader of Scripture will not fail to remark that the statement of the existence, the moral propensities, and the agency of Satan is extended nearly through the whole of the sacred volume, from *Genesis* to the *Revelations*; that its writers in their portraiture of our great adversary, employ the same images, adhere to the same appellations throughout; that a complete identity of character is exhibited, marked with the same features of force, cruelty, malignity, and fraud. He is everywhere depicted as alike the enemy of God and man; who having appeared as a serpent in the history of the fall, is recognized by St. Paul under the same character, in express allusion to that event (2 *Cor.* XI. 3.), and afterwards by St. John in the *Apocalypse*, as that old Serpent, the Devil, and Satan which deceiveth the world. *Rev.* XII. 9.

“We have therefore just the same evidence of the real personality of Satan, as of the Holy Spirit, and exactly of the same kind. Both are described by inspired persons; to both volitions, purposes, and personal characteristics are ascribed. A uniformity of representation, an identity of character, distinguished respectively by the most opposite moral qualities, equally pervade the statements of Scripture as to each, to such a degree, that supposing the sacred writers to have designed to teach us the proper personality of Satan, it is not easy to conceive what other language they could have adopted. * * * * *

“We are taught to conceive of Satan as the head of a spiritual empire of great extent, and comprehending within itself innumerable subordinate agents. The term Satan, in application to this subject, is invariably found in the singular number, implying that there is one designated by that appellation. His associates in the primeval rebellion are spoken of in the plural number, and are denominated his angels. Thus, the punishment reserved for them at the close of time, is said to be “prepared for the devil and his angels.” What their number may be it is vain to conjecture; but when we reflect on the magnitude of the

universe, and the extensive and contemplated agency in which they are affirmed to be engaged, we shall probably be inclined to conjecture that it by far exceeds that of the human race. * * * * *

“ In asserting the personality and agency of Satan, we are not, it should be remembered, proposing to our reader a speculation in philosophy ; we are asserting a fact beyond the limits of its jurisdiction ; a fact for which we profess to produce no other evidence, besides the declaration of Scripture. If its testimony is not sufficient to decide the question, we are out at sea, nor is it possible to specify what doctrines we are warranted to receive on its authority, especially when we consider that to enlarge our knowledge of the invisible world, would appear to be the proper business of a revelation, whose exclusive glory it is to ‘ bring life and immortality to light ’. * * * * *

“ The attempt to set aside the doctrine on this subject, derived from Scripture, under the notion of its being *unphilosophical*, is puerile and unmeaning. The truth is, that it is in no other sense unphilosophical, except that philosophy has nothing to do with it ; that it implies supernatural economy, to which its principles are totally inapplicable, and which it can neither affirm nor deny. Here, if anywhere, we must have recourse to ‘ the Law and the Testimony ’ ; if they [the interpreters] speak not according to them ‘ there is no light. ’ ” * * If there be no personal Devil, the temptation of Jesus must have been a mere vision—a temptation by such a tendency to evil, as exists in every human mind. But this would represent Jesus to us as corrupt and fallible, weak and sinful, whereas the Scripture says that he was “ holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners ” (*Heb. VII. 26*). “ To ascribe to Satan such an interference in the moral concerns of the world, as is implied in his incessantly tempting men to sin, is to suppose him omnipresent, [and almost omniscient] a supposition repugnant to [inconsistent with] the nature of a finite being. It must be confessed that the Scriptures of the New Testament teach us to conceive of satanic agency as concurring in almost every act of deliberate sin ; he is said to have filled the heart of Ananias, to have entered in Judas, ‘ after he had taken the sop ’, and to be ‘ the god of this world

who worketh mightily with the children of disobedience”.

Polytheistic, and in many respects unreasonable, as this belief in a personal devil is, it yet appears to me to be an essential and indispensable part of Christianity. Evil exists—that must be admitted ; but an omnipotent Creator and Governor of the Universe, who is the embodiment of love, could not create it nor permit its existence. He can make men to enjoy eternal and exquisite pleasure without any alloy of affliction, if we are to believe the story of Paradise, and the promise of Heaven. Since there is then no impossibility of pure pleasure, and since a good God could not create evil, we must believe that it was created and “brought into the world” by Satan, an evil spirit, who exists in despite of the good Spirit, and is engaged in a constant war with him.

§ 48. *The Bible asserts the existence of a material Hell.* It is necessary that a personal Devil, a Prince of Darkness, should have a home, a dominion ; and such the Christian Devil has. His realm is the material Hell where the enemies of Jehovah are broiled with infinite and endless agonies over eternal flames. The New Testament writers make frequent references to this home of the damned.

“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels”. *Mat. XXV. 31.*

“The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he had reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire”. *Jude. 6, 7.*

“He [Christ] will thoroughly purge his [threshing] floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner ; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable”. *Luke. III. 17.*

“The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. *Mat. VIII. 12.*

“The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity ; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth”. *Mat. XIII. 42.*

“If thy hand offend thee, cut it off ; it is better for thee to go into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire

that never shall be quenched ; where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. *Mark. IX. 43.*

“These both were cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone”. *Rev. XIX. 20.*

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophets are, and shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever. *Rev. XX. 10.*

“The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone” *Rev. XXI. 8.*

“If a man worship the beast or his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb ; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth ever and ever ; and they have no rest day nor night”. *Rev. X. 9-11.*

After Jesus was crucified, he went down to the place of the damned, and delivered a course of lectures for their edification, addressing himself, as it seems, more particularly to those who lived before Noah, when men were so wicked on the earth that Jehovah repented that he had created the species. Peter (2 *Pet. III. 19, 20*), says that Christ, under the direction of the Spirit, “went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing”. Of late, the Christian priests have said very little about this visit of Jesus to a hell, the very existence of which as a material place has lost credit even among the most ignorant ; but a hundred years ago it was the universal doctrine of the Protestant as it still is of the Catholic Church. The Episcopalian prayer-book makes special mention that “Christ descended into hell”.

Such is hell ! And it may not be improper to ask who are going thither ? Jesus tells us that “many be called, but few chosen” (*Mat. XX. 16*). Paul informs us that salvation is by faith, “by the works of the law shall no man be justified” (*Gal. II. 16*), and he assures us that “no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost” (*1 Cor. XII. 3*). But even if men might hope, by being

as upright as possible, to merit salvation, they would get little encouragement from the Bible which declares "there is no man that sinneth not" (1 K. VIII. 46). Let no one imagine that there is any injustice in the condemnation of nine out of ten to hell. "Is it not lawful for me" says Christ, "to do what I like with mine own"? Nothing which I might say, would be appropriate here, and carry so much weight as the following extracts from Massillon's great sermon *On the Small Number of the Chosen*:

"To the question, how many will be saved, Jesus Christ replies to you to-day that there were many widows afflicted by the famine in Israel, but only the widow of Sarepta deserved to be succored by the prophet Elias, that the number of lepers in Israel was great in the time of Elisha, but that Naaman was the only one healed by the man of God. * * Only the family of Noah was saved from the flood; Abraham alone was selected to be the father of the chosen people. Of the six hundred thousand Hebrews none save Caleb, and Joshua entered the land of promise; Job was the only just man in the land of Uz, Lot in Sodom, and the three Jewish children in Babylon. Figures so frightful are confirmed by the expressions of the prophets; you will have seen in *Isaiah* that the 'elect' are as rare as the grapes in the vineyard, which have escaped the search of the harvesters—as scarce as the wheat stalks in the fields which have been reaped.

"The Gospel adds yet more features to the terrors of these figures. I might speak to you of the two ways—one of which is narrow, rugged, and trodden but by few—the other wide, smooth, strewn with flowers, and covered with the multitude of mankind. In the sacred books the people generally are always spoken of as deserving of reproof, and the righteous as forming an insignificant number, when compared with the great mass of the sinners. * * * *

"I figure to myself that our last hour is come; the heavens are opening over our heads; time is no more, and eternity has begun. Jesus Christ is about to appear to judge us according to our deserts, and we are here awaiting at his hands the sentence of everlasting life or death. I ask you now—stricken with terror like yourselves—in no wise separating my lot from yours, but placing myself in the

situation in which we all must one day stand before God, our judge—if Christ, I ask, were at this moment to come to make the awful partition of the just and the unjust—think you that the greater number would be even equal? If the lives of the multitude here were sifted, would he find among us ten righteous? Would he find a single one?”

And every one who is not righteous, is doomed to broil forever on a slow fire, in infinite and everlasting agony, which will be heightened by the constant view of heaven with the saints in the full enjoyment of infinite bliss as Dives, whose only sin was his wealth, while in hell; and he “tormented in this flame”, looked up to heaven, and saw Lazarus, the beggar, whose only virtue was his poverty, lolling and sunning himself in Abraham’s bosom. Such a sight was enough to have capped the climax of his agony, but something more was wanting, and he got it when Abraham, in reply to his request for a drop of water to cool his tongue, thus spoke to him: “Son, remember that thou in thy life-time, receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented” (*Luke XVI. 19–26*). Poor Dives! What business had he to be a rich man? Did he not know that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven? Let him roast! Don’t you hear his fat sputtering in the fire?

The prospect of seeing this grand barbecue of sinners is exceedingly agreeable to some of the strong-nerved Christians: and, indeed, why should they not delight in all God’s works, and particularly those whereby he vindicates the sacred principles of his justice and mercy? It is true that his ideas of justice and mercy may not precisely agree with theirs; but the Church tells them that they must not trust that carnal reason of theirs; it “is the bride of the devil”, to use Luther’s expression, and is always watching for an opportunity to lead them into revolt against their maker. They must submit their judgment to the plain meaning of the Gospel, for, as Chalmers says, “There is perhaps nothing more thoroughly beyond the cognizance of the human faculties than the truths of religion, and the ways of that mighty and invisible being, who is the object of it”. Tertullian, “the doctor and guide” of the Christian Churches

throughout Western Europe several centuries after Jesus, was decidedly in favor of the everlasting fireworks. "You are fond of spectacles", exclaimed he, "expect the greatest of all spectacles, the last and eternal judgment of the universe. How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs, so many fancied gods groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness : so many magistrates who persecuted the name of the Lord, liquefying in fiercer fires than they ever kindled against the Christians ; so many sage philosophers blushing in red hot flames with their deluded scholars ; so many celebrated poets trembling before the tribunal, not of Minos, but of Christ ; so many tragedians, more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings : so many dancers".*

As a large proportion of my readers are likely, if the Christians are to be believed, to go to hell, it is but proper that they should learn something about the place before going. The following is from the pen of a celebrated divine† who was apparently full of the spirit of that kingdom, and who like many other good Christians delighted to warm himself at "the cheerful blazes of damnation". "Almost every natural man that hears of hell flatters himself that he shall escape it ; he depends upon himself for his own security : he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do. Every one lays out matters in his own mind, how he shall avoid damnation and flatters himself that he contrives well for himself, and that his schemes will not fail. They hear indeed, that there are but few saved and that the greater part of men that have died heretofore, are gone to hell : but each imagines that he lays out matters better for his own escape than others have done. He does not intend to come to that place of torment : he says within himself that he intends to take effectual care and order matters so for himself as not to fail.

"But the foolish children of men miserably delude themselves in their own schemes and in confidence in their own

* Quoted in Gibbon's Rome.

† JONATHAN EDWARDS, D. D. Sermon entitled Sinners in the hand of an angry God.

strength and wisdom : they trust to nothing but a shadow. The greater part of those who heretofore have lived under the same means of grace, are now dead and undoubtedly gone to hell : and it was not because they were not as wise as those who are now alive : it was not because they did not lay out matters as well for themselves to secure their own escape. * * * * *

* * “ Whatever pains a natural man takes in religion, whatever prayers he makes, till he believes in Christ, God is under no manner of obligation to keep him a moment from eternal destruction. So that thus it is that natural men are held in the hand of God over the pit of hell ; they have deserved the fiery pit and are already sentenced to it : and God is dreadfully provoked, his anger is as great towards them as to them that are actually suffering the executions of the fierceness of his wrath in hell : and they have done nothing in the least to appease or abate that anger, neither is God in the least bound by any promise to hold them up one moment : the Devil is waiting for them, hell is gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them, and would fain lay hold on them, and swallow them up. * * All that preserves them every moment is the mere arbitrary will, and uncovenanted, unobliged forbearance of an incensed God ”.

Hell “ is everlasting wrath.* It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment : but you must suffer it to all eternity. There will be no end to this exquisite, horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts and amaze your soul : and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, and rest at all. You will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty and merciless vengeance : and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point of what remains. * * * * *

“ When the Saints in glory, therefore, shall see the

* EDWARDS. Sermon entitled, The torments of the wicked in Hell no occasion of grief to the Saints in Heaven.

doleful state of the damned, how will this heighten their sense of the blessedness of their own state, so exceedingly different from it ! When they shall see, how miserable others of their fellow-creatures are, who were naturally in the same circumstances with themselves : when they shall see the smoke of their torments and the raging of the flames of their burning, and hear their dolorous shrieks and cries, and consider in the meantime, that they are in the most blissful state, and shall surely be in it to all eternity, how will they rejoice ! * * How will they admire that dying love of Christ, which has redeemed them from so great a misery and purchased for them so great happiness, and has so distinguished them from others of their fellow-creatures."

"How * much soever you dread damnation, and are affrighted and concerned at like thoughts of it, yet if God should indeed eternally damn you, you would be met but in your own way : you would be dealt with exactly according to your own dealing". "Assuredly † we cannot but recoil from the idea of countless myriads of our fellow-creatures [including the great mass of our nearest relatives and dearest friends, and the truest and most efficient laborers for the general good of humanity] being the victims of almighty wrath while eternity rolls on. To our human sympathies the idea is terrible. Yet, if such be God's ascertained purpose [if such be the plain meaning of the New Testament] then let us adore in prostrate veneration, never doubting that wisdom and justice, aye, and love too, enter into this mysterious decree".

§ 49. *The Bible teaches immediate divine government.* When barbarians rise to the conception of a personal, living God, they imagine that every occurrence of nature is the direct act of their divinity. They have no idea of natural laws, the perception of which does not become clear until man has attained to a very considerable degree of civilization. Every event for them must be the act of God, — his immediate act. As he is omnipotent, he needs no machines, no means to assist him in his labors, and as he is all-know-

* EDWARDS. Sermon entitled, *The Justice of God in the damnation of Sinners.*

† Christian Observer. July 1854.

ing and all-wise, he is competent to conduct all the complicated affairs of the universe. To assert that any event is not the immediate effect of his will, is to deny that he governs the world ; and to deny his government, is to deny the first attribute of his Godship. "The perpetual junction of Gods and men, in the same picture, and familiar appeal to ever present divine agency" says Grote "was in harmony with the interpretation of nature universal" in ancient times. The good or evil fortune of a man was supposed to be the expression of divine favor or disfavor. There was no such thing as chance. Even the turn of a die was governed by God ; and to cast lots was considered as a proper and trustworthy method of learning the will of the Omnipotent Anthropomorphism. Thus Jesus said that a sparrow could not fall to the ground except by the act of Jehovah, and even the hairs of a man's head are numbered (*Mat. X. 29. 30*). According to the Pentateuch every event of good or evil fortune which happened to the Jews, was either a reward or a punishment. Moses represents God as making the rainbow by a direct exercise of his will, without any intervening influence of the qualities of the pre-existing light and water, to which the formation of the rainbow is ascribed in our scientific books. So Saul is represented as going to see Samuel under the influence of divine impulse, whereas he had a sufficient motive in the loss of his asses. Pharaoh refuses to permit the Israelites to depart, not on account of the natural pride and blindness which are supposed to govern the actions of some modern monarchs, but because Jehovah hardened his heart. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, appeared frequently in person to his favorites, talked with them, instructed them, made contracts with them, and was to all intents and purposes their God. He repeatedly led the armies of Israel to the battle-field. He slew the Amalekites with stones from heaven, and stopped the sun in its course, so that Joshua might destroy the defeated Amorites. When Job was smitten, it was not without a previous consultation on the subject between Satan and the Lord of Heaven ; and when Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus were victorious over their enemies it was because Jehovah had chosen them as his agents, to inflict punishment on those who had incurred his displeasure. God

taught David to fight, commanded Gideon to select his soldiers, to arise in the night and attack the foe. The Lord set his enemies to fight amongst themselves. He taught Bezaleel and Aholiah. They and all the ingenious mechanics were filled with 'the spirit of God'. The same spirit of the Lord enabled Samson to kill a lion and many men". Even the pregnancy of women was included in the matters to which he gave his special superintendence : and in *Genesis* alone, six cases are expressly mentioned where children owed their conception to his interposition.

The story of Jonah and the whale furnishes so forcible an illustration of Biblical superstition, and is withal so amusing in itself, as a part of what has been received as the "Word of God" by all Europe for hundreds of years, that I shall give it entire. Once upon a time, as the Scripture says Jehovah saw fit to direct Jonah (probably a Levite and professional prophet) to go to Nineveh and tell the people there that their city was doomed to destruction. Jonah however did not like the task, and therefore took a ship at Joppa, bound for Tarshish, to escape "from the presence of the Lord." But Jehovah, to escape from whom was not so easy as Jonah supposed, raised a storm, and the sailors knowing the storm implied that a sinner was on board *their* ship, cast lots to see who was the offender. The lot fell on Jonah, and the sailors threw him overboard to appease the offended Deity. Foreseeing this result, and apparently approving of the sailors method of allaying storms, he had "prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah". This fish must have been manufactured specially for the occasion, there being no animals in the sea now, which have a throat to admit, and a stomach to hold a whole man. Jonah's fish probably had a room fitted up inside "with all the modern conveniences" so that the prophet could pass the time agreeably. He lived there for three days and three nights, and occupied portion of his time in prayer, saying that he remembered the Lord, and would perform his sacrifices and keep his vows. And the Lord "*spake* unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon *dry* land." Jehovah then told Jonah again to prophesy against Nineveh ; and he went and foretold that within forty days the city should be destroyed. At these tidings the Ninevites covered them-

selves with sackcloth and sat in ashes. The Lord was so much pleased with this method of seeking his favor, that he changed his purpose and spared the city. With this change of purpose Jonah was "displeased exceedingly", and he asked Jehovah to kill him. The Lord refused to grant this request and to conciliate the prophet, planted a gourd seed, where Jonah was, and during the night, it grew so rapidly that the next day it furnished him with shade overhead, and he was exceeding glad. But Jehovah put a worm in the gourd vine, and it withered ; and Jonah lamented for it. Then the Lord asked whether it was not proper for him to spare Nineveh which had 120,000 infants not knowing their right hands from their left, (implying an entire population of 2,000,000) when the prophet thought the destruction of a gourd vine a proper matter for grief. There the story ends, and we are not informed, whether Jehovah succeeded in convincing Jonah that He was right. A pious author* says "His attempt, to flee from the presence of the Lord must have sprung from a partial insanity, produced by the excitement of distracting motives in an irascible and melancholy heart [!]. The temerity and folly of the fugitive could scarcely be credited, if they had not been equalled by future outbreaks of a similar peevish and morbid infatuation". Jehovah selected a crazy man for his prophet and stuck to his selection ! Will not somebody advance the theory that the believers in this age are as crazy as the prophets were in that ? Must not people be crazy who believe in crazy prophets ? The same pious author continues—"The history of Jonah, is certainly striking and extraordinary. Its characteristic prodigy does not resemble the other miraculous phenomena recorded in Scripture ; yet we must believe in its literal occurrence, as the Bible affords no indication of its being a myth, allegory, or parable. On the other hand, our Savior's pointed and peculiar allusion to it, is a presumption of its reality (*Mat. XII. 40*). The opinion of the earlier Jews (*Tobit. XIV. 4*, *Josephus Ant. IX. 10, 2*), is also in favor of the literality of the narrative."

A natural consequence of belief in the dogmas that every natural event is caused by the immediate volition of

* BISHOP KITTO'S Cyclopaedia. Article *Jonah*.

Jehovah, and that he was very much concerned about the doings of his chosen people, was the belief in the efficacy of prayer to induce him to change his purposes. The Pentateuch states that the Lord changed his intentions in regard to Sodom half a dozen times, during a short conversation with Abraham, and Moses frequently succeeded in reasoning the Deity out of his rash wrath against Israel. After Hezekiah's death had been decreed in Heaven, the monarch obtained a reprieve for fifteen years ; and though "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are", yet when "he prayed earnestly that it might not rain" it "rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months" (*James V. 17*). Jesus desired that his followers should pray that "daily bread" might be furnished them, and that they might not be "led into temptation", thus insinuating that Jehovah would lead man into temptation, if left to himself. And he had so much confidence in the efficacy of prayers offered according to his directions that he instructed his followers to take "no thought for the morrow", but to rely on their Heavenly Father who "feedeth the fowls of the air" and would not neglect his worshippers, who are "better than they" (*Mat. VI. 25-34*). And he even tells them that "all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (*Luke XI. 9*). St. James appears to be not less confident of the virtue of prayers. He says "Is any one sick among you ? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up" (*James V. 14*). The author of the book of *Chronicles* had a similar notion ; for he mentions it as a matter of reproach, that when Asa's disease was "exceeding great" "he sought not to the Lord but to the physicians" (*2 Ch. XVI. 12*). How is it that modern Christians have lost all faith in the healing powers of the Lord, and trust themselves entirely to the physicians ? The more enlightened Christians are, the less faith they have in the Lord. It is only among a very benighted populace that a Christian minister could find any faith, if he were to advise a sick man to follow the advice of St. James, neglect the doctors and trust in Jehovah.

It is absurd to suppose that an omnipotent and all-wise God would change his modes of action ; and consequently we should believe either that the world is now governed without the intervention of general laws by the immediate divine will, the purposes of which may be changed according to human entreaties, or we should believe that the authors of the Bible in writing of these matters were blind believers in barbarous superstitions. That the world is not governed as Moses supposed it to be, is now pretty well established. If a man should attribute his pecuniary prosperity or misfortunes to the approval or disapproval of his religious doctrines by Jehovah, he would be laughed at on all sides, by Christians as well as by Freethinkers. If the sailors of a ship during a very severe storm, were to think there was some Jonah, hateful to God, on board, whose destruction would allay the storm, and should accordingly draw lots and cast into the water him, who drew the shortest straw, the whole civilized world would be horrified at the deed, and would demand the punishment of the sailors as murderers : and the annals of the country would mention the affair, not in tones of approval, as is done in the Bible, but with unmeasured condemnation, and lamentation over the prevalence of so base a superstition. God's will is not now shown in storms, or lot-casting. "The* winds and waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators"—not of the most pious captains. "If † two men travel on the same road, the one to rob, the other to relieve a fellow-creature who is starving, will any but the most fanatic contend that they do not both run the same chance of falling over a stone and breaking their legs ? and is it not often matter of fact that the robber returns safe, and the just man sustains the injury ?" As the belief in the manifestations of the divine pleasure or displeasure in all the trifling events of nature is untrue and superstitious now, so it must have been untrue and superstitious in the times of Moses and Jesus. Or if it was true that Jehovah manifested himself to the Jews, why shall we not believe that Jupiter manifested himself to the Greeks and Romans ? We have precisely the same kind of testimony for divine interpositions in Greece as in Judea.

* GIBBON.

† THE REV. SYDNEY SMITH. Article on Methodism.

If this doctrine of the Immediate Divine Government of the Universe be rejected, the whole scheme of Christianity must also be rejected, for all its "dispensations" claim to have been given, in violation of the ordinary course of nature, by the Immediate Providence of God. The whole Old Testament is one long record of Jehovah's toils, trials and tribulations in endeavoring, by the constant exercise of his omnipotence, to keep his "holy nation" from becoming very unholy. If we conclude that all the accounts of his conversations and covenants with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, and David are mere tales, we cannot well believe that the assertions of Jesus, Paul, and Peter, of similar conversations and covenants between them and Jehovah are worthy of much more credit.

§ 50. *The Bible teaches the existence of Angels.* Angels are God's servants and messengers, who go to make up his heavenly court. They are a necessity to a personal God, who has his throne in some corner of the blue overhead, and who cannot go in person to deliver all his messages.

"The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose" (*Gen. VI. 2*). Those sons of God are supposed to have been angels, though, for all we know, they may have been little gods.

When John, the Baptist, was conceived, an angel announced the fact to the prophet's father, who wanted to have some security for the truth of the announcement; "and the angel answering said unto him, 'I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings'". (*Luke, I. 19*). The old man was satisfied.

When Jesus was arrested, Peter so far forgot the doctrines of his master as to draw his sword to resist, and in the heat of his indignation he went so far as to cut off an ear of the High Priest's servant. For this bloody deed, Jesus reproved him, saying, "Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" *Mat. XXVI. 5*.

The manna which Jehovah sent to the Jews was "angel's food". *Psa. LXXVIII. 25*.

The two angels, sent by Jehovah to examine into the

moral condition of Sodom, may have been mere phantasms, but yet their appearance excited very impure desires. In fact, the angels appeared to be so substantial to the Sodomites, that the latter would not listen to the generous offer of the pious patriarch, placing his virgin daughters at their disposal. Virgins were probably a drug in that market ; but the supply of angels was small, and the demand great. *Gen. XIX. 1-13.*

The Biblical angels are divine in their nature, and belief in them is polytheistic. But to reject them, is to reject the plain meaning of many important passages in the Scriptures. To deny the existence of angels breaks the support of the divinity of Jesus, which we learn only through the angels which communicated the fact of the incarnation to Joseph and Mary. " We have the testimony of the Jews themselves", says Strauss, " that they brought the names of the angels with them from Babylon after the captivity. Hence arises a series of questions extremely perplexing to the Christians. Were the doctrines of the angelic existence and nomenclature false, so long as they continued to be the exclusive possession of the heathens, but true so soon as they came to be received among the Jews ? Or was it at all times equally true, and was an important truth discovered by an idolatrous nation sooner than by the people of God ? If nations shut out from a particular and divine revelation, arrived at truth by the light of reason alone, sooner than the Jews who were guided by that revelation, then either the revelation was superfluous, or its influence was merely negative : that is, it operated as a check to the premature acquisition of knowledge".

§ 51. *The Bible teaches that some diseases among men are caused by the possession of the body by devils.* Epilepsy was supposed by the populace of Judea, in the time of Jesus, to be always caused by the possession of the person by devils. " And when he had called unto his twelve disciples [to send them out for the first time to make proselytes], he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease". He said to them " Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils". *Mat. X. 1. 8.*

On one occasion Jesus met two men possessed with

devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce. "And behold they [the devils] cried out 'what have we to do with thee Jesus, thou son of God'?" And they besought him, that, if he should cast him out, he would permit them to enter a herd of swine near by. He did so, "and behold the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters" (*Mat. VIII. 28-32*). If Jesus were to commit such an action in the United States, he would be liable to prosecution and punishment for "malicious mischief", as the crime of unlawfully destroying or injuring private property is technically styled; but it is possible that these swine were owned by some renegade Jew, who was properly made to suffer for his contempt of the Mosaic law. The devils have ceased to enter the human body now except among savages, Mormons, and Spiritualists. Those sects are still subject to demoniac influence, and with the evil, they have the remedy of possessing many persons able to exorcise the wicked spirits.

§ 52. *The Bible teaches that wicked men may be miracle-workers, or prophets.* Saul induced a witch to call the dead Samuel from his grave; and the living king, and the dead prophet held a long conversation together. Their words are reported literally by the conscientious chronicler (*1 S. XXVIII. 10-19*). Moses had ordered, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (*Ex. XXII. 18*), and before the witch would gratify Saul's request, he had to promise that he would not betray her to punishment.

"Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerer; now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents". *Ex. VII. 10-12*.

The Egyptian magicians also imitated Aaron in creating frogs. *Ex. VIII. 6. 7*.

"There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders" *Mat. XXIV. 24*.

And John answered him, saying "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, but he followed not us; and we forbade him because he followeth us not" *Mark. IX. 38*.

"There was a certain man called Simon, which before

time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria". *Acts, VIII. 9.*

"A man, or a woman, who has a familiar spirit, or is a diviner, shall surely be put to death" (*Lev. XX. 27*). "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (*Ex. XXII. 18. Deut. XVIII. 9-12*). "It has been contended by some", says Norton, "in modern times that these laws do not sanction the belief in witchcraft, but were directed only against impostors, falsely pretending to magical powers. But if such individuals had been meant, they would have been designated according to their true character as impostors, not in language which conveyed the idea, as plainly as any language could do, that their pretenses were well founded. The belief in magic appears to have been universal in the ancient world. Such laws, as we find in the *Pentateuch*, had their origin in this belief, and could not be understood but as confirming it".

When the Israelites approached the land of the Moabites, King Balak was fearful lest his people should be overpowered by the worshippers of Jehovah, as the Amorites had previously been. In his fear, he sent to solicit the aid of a heathen priest, named Balaam, who dwelt in a neighboring land, and was reputed to have great influence over future events, by his blessings and curses. Balaam, though not one of Jehovah's chosen people, of whom, indeed, as it appears, he had never before heard, was yet in the habit of communicating, by direct conversation, with that divinity. The priest told Balak's messengers that he must speak to the Lord of Heaven, before cursing the approaching strangers. Jehovah had kept one eye on Balaam all this time, and before long he went down and asked what those messengers were after. Balaam told him that Balak had sent, begging him to curse "a people come out of Egypt", who threatened to cover "the face of the earth". Thereupon Jehovah "said unto Balaam, 'Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people'". The priest, in accordance with that direction sent word to Balak, begging to be excused, because the Lord had forbidden him to curse the invaders. Balak thought that Balaam was holding back for more pay, and accordingly he sent messengers higher in rank than the first

party, and commissioned them to offer much more pay. Balaam loved filthy lucre, and knowing that Jehovah changed his intentions frequently, he determined to ask Him again about this speculation. Jehovah, seeing that another party of messengers had visited his priest, went down, and told Balaam, "'rise up, and go with them; but yet, the word which I shall say unto thee that thou shalt do'; and Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. And God's anger was kindled, because he went"! The folly of Jehovah is here represented in a strong light. In the *first* place, he told Balaam to stay at home; in the *second* place, he told him to go; and in the *third* place, he got angry, because he went. In his anger, Jehovah sent an angel, who stopped the covetous priest. There was quite a scene between the angel, Balaam, and the latter's ass (a four-footed beast), which spoke almost as sensibly as the fox and the crow in *Æsop's fables*. The conclusion was that the angel said to Balaam "Go with the men but only the word which I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak". Thus, after all, Balaam received no other order than he had received before he started. When the priest came to the king of Moab, he told the monarch that his cursing and blessing would depend upon the inspiration of Jehovah. Balak trusted that that inspiration, under the influence of liberal presents, would be hostile to the strangers, and accordingly he made preparations for a great public cursing, wherein the Jews were to be damned, according to the most orthodox fashion. When all the sacrifices were ready, Balaam raised his voice to do the cursing, but a blessing of the strangers came out. Thus, the honor of Jehovah, the profit of his prophet, and the safety of his people were alike secured (*Num. XXII. XXIII. XXIV*). The most singular thing about the affair is, that Jehovah should have inspired such a scoundrel, and have been so much concerned about his blessings and curses. Notwithstanding the facts that Balaam led the people "to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication" (*Rer. II. 14*), and "loved the ways of unrighteousness" (*2 Pet. II. 15*), yet he "heard the words of God and knew the knowledge of the Most High", and by that knowledge he foretold truly the for-

tune of Israel and of Amalek, of Moab and of the Kenites, and he even foresaw that "a star shall come out of Jacob" (*Num. XXIV. 16-21*), interpreted by many commentators on the Bible, to mean Jesus.

CHAPTER IX.

SCIENCE VS. THE MOSAIC COSMOGONY.

There is "a philosophical infamy" in resorting to a supernatural cause to explain any natural phenomena.

"The dogmatic opinions of former centuries [in regard to the origin of natural occurrences] live only in the prejudices of the uneducated, and in certain creeds, which are conscious of their weakness and gladly hide themselves in obscurity." HUMBOLDT. *Kosmos*.

§ 53. The Bible contains a history of the creation of the universe, of the formation of the world, of the placing of plants and animals upon it, of a deluge which covered the whole earth sixteen hundred years subsequent to the creation, and of many wonderful events which occurred in the meantime. A great portion of this ante-diluvian history is declared by science to be false.

The Bible asks us to believe that the universe is only six thousand years old. The falsehood of this assertion is universally admitted among learned men. Sir Wm. Herschel published a paper in the Philosophical Transactions for the year 1800 in which he gave it as his opinion that some of the nebulae perceptible to the astronomer are more than 10,000,000,000,000,000 miles distant from the earth, and if that be the case their light (travelling at the rate of nearly 200,000 miles in a second) could not have reached the earth in less than 1,900,000 years. The later discoveries by the larger telescope of Lord Rosse show that this estimate of Herschel, of the distance of some of the stars, is very moderate. Such is the voice of astronomy. Professor Phillips, a Geologist, whose opinion is quoted as approximately correct by Brewster in his work, entitled

More Worlds than One, says that the various strata of terraqueous rocks beginning at the Primitive, and rising through the Old Red Sandstone, Carboniferous, New Red Sandstone, Oolite and Lias, Cretaceous, and Tertiary are respectively 20,000, 9,000, 10,000, 2,000, 2,500, 1,100, and 2,000 feet thick ; and the sum total, of 46,000 feet or 9 miles of rock, at the present rate of formation, would have required millions of years. Lyell states that the bed of the Niagara and the delta of the Mississippi bear witness that those streams have been running in their present courses fifty thousand years. It is the unanimous opinion of Geologists that there are many animal remains on the earth which can not be less than 100,000 years old. So much for Geology. Pritchard, the greatest ethnological authority says " Biblical writers had no revelation on Chronology," and asserts that man has existed on the earth for hundreds of thousands of years.

The falsehood of this statement having been proved, so that Christians were compelled to abandon it, they resorted to their usual policy of asserting that the Bible does not mean what it says. Some of them say that the word "day" in the account of creation does not mean day, but a period of many, perhaps millions of years. Others say that the "days" were only of twenty-four hours each, but that there was a very great period of time between the creation of matter and the creation of light which took place on the first day of the six. Both these interpretations are fair samples of the miserable subterfuges to which the Christians are compelled to resort to protect their would-be revelation from the assaults of mightier science. Some of them at first tried the experiment of asserting that there was stronger evidence for the truth of the Bible than for the truth of Geology : but they soon found that would not do. Geology was plainly the stronger, and the Christians saw that they must either confess their gospel the weaker of the two, and interpret it according to the new science, or be crushed utterly. Therefore, we have the interpretations above referred to—miserable shifts, but the best which the wisdom of the Scripture-geologists could discover. The *first* assumption—that "day" don't mean "day"—implies that Moses and Jehovah did not understand the meaning of words or

did not desire to tell the truth. If they meant periods of millions of years, why did they not say so? These Scripture-geologists might as well say that when Moses wrote "day" he meant "second". He said these days of creation had "morning" and "evening". Do not those words imply days of twenty-four hours each? The other interpretation is still worse. Neither has a particle of ground to stand upon: both owe their existence entirely and only to the irresistible proof that the plain meaning of the words is false. The creation of the heaven and the earth in the beginning was evidently part of the work of the first day. Thus Moses says "the heaven and the earth were finished" "and he rested on the seventh day from *all* the work which he had made" (*Gen. II. 1.*). Does not that language imply very clearly that the making of the heaven and the earth was part of the six day's work? In giving the ten commandments, Jehovah, while ordering the Jews to observe the sabbath, says "For in six days the Lord made *heaven and earth*, the sea and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh *day*: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it" (*Ex. XX. 11*). Those words show that the whole creation was comprised within six days, and that those days were of only twenty-four hours each. If the six "days" were severally periods of thousands of years, the seventh day on which Jehovah rested, ought to have been a similar period, so that he could obtain "refreshment" corresponding to his toils. But the seventh day could not have been a very long one, for Adam lived through it, and long afterwards, at the birth of Seth, was only 130 years old. Besides, the growth of the earth according to the statements of Geology is a very different affair from the Mosaic creation. Genesis represents the business of making the world as finished at once, as a wood-turner would gouge a wooden ball from a piece of timber; whereas the Geologic creation never had an end; and it is still in progress. Rocks are being deposited now at the bottom of the sea, full of the remains of animalculæ, in a manner precisely similar to that in progress a hundred million years ago. Jehovah rested from *his* work: nature does not rest from hers.

It has been said that the words in the beginning of *Gene-*

sis were not written to be interpreted literally. To this I shall reply in the words of Dr. J. Pye Smith, one of the most famous of the Scripture-geologists—"The fact of a clear and certain understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures is above all reasonable doubt. The construction of the language is the most clear and luminous that can well be imagined. * * His [Professor Powell's] notion that we have here 'the language of figure and poetry' is palpably erroneous. The whole is in the style of plain narrative, evidently to be understood as a plain, simple, straight-forward, unadorned history."

What dodge will the Christians try next? Will they say that Jehovah made the universe in six days, with the wrinkles of millions of years on its brow?—said wrinkles being placed there for some inscrutable purpose, which men should revere in ignorance, since the Almighty has not seen fit to reveal it? If a judge should venture to interpret a law with the same violence to the plain language as is done, to the letter of *Genesis* by the Christians, he would be hooted off the bench: and if a private individual were to twist the meaning of his written contracts as much to favor his pecuniary interests, he would lose all character for honesty, and get into jail besides. Fortunately for the priests of all ages and nations, there are no such penalties for false and fraudulent interpretations of their super-annuated Gospels.

§ 54. The authors of *Genesis* would have us believe that Jehovah created from nothing the earth with the animal and vegetable kingdoms complete, substantially as they now are, within five days, by successive decrees of his will, and that after the creation of the earth, he made all the rest of the universe as it now is, in one day—the planets and stars being made for no purpose, save to give light and measure time for the earth. This cosmogony is directly contradicted by the sciences of Geology and Astronomy. There is good reason to believe that the universe was not created from nothing in its present shape, but that it grew to be what it is, from an inferior condition, by a development as gradual and natural as that of a tree from a seed. There is also good reason to believe that the animal and vegetable kingdoms were not created at once complete as

they now are, but that they too grew from inferior conditions.

We see that all natural phenomena are caused now-a-days by natural forces, acting according to natural laws ; and we have no reason for presuming that a different state of affairs ever existed ; more particularly when we find that the influence of the natural forces, already known to science, may suffice to explain the formation of the universe as it is. "There* are not, and never can be any probabilities in nature, that are not suggested by experience." Many of the ablest geologists and astronomers of the day believe, that before the universe took its present shape, all space was filled with a fire-mist—that is, with matter like that of the earth, at a most intense heat, whereby it was expanded so that one grain of it would fill more than a cubic mile of room. The influence of gravity caused motion toward the centre, and currents meeting caused the mass to commence revolving upon an axis. The great ball began to give out the heat which was in it ; and the contraction caused by the loss of heat produced an increase of speed, as the motions of a pendulum are quicker in proportion as it is made shorter. With the increase of speed, some of the soft matter flew off, and under the laws which govern similar bodies under like circumstances now-a-days, formed a ring revolving about the mother-ball. Soon the ring broke ; and its elements collected into one or a number of balls, each of which revolved about the mother-ball, at the place where thrown off, and rotated on its axis, to which rotation it was driven by the excess of speed which the outer edge of the ring had over the inner.

The mother ball kept on, giving out heat, contracting, becoming more dense, and presently another piece flew off, and this second offspring followed the example of the first—the latter being now at a considerable distance from the mother-ball, and continuing its revolutions at the speed which the mother had when the offspring flew off. By this process of gradual cooling, condensation, increase of speed, and repeated disruption of particles flying off from the surface, we should at last have a number of little balls rotating and revolving about a great one, the revolutions and

* PROFESSOR SEDGWICK.

rotations of all being in the same direction. All the balls too would have a globular form, wider at the equator than at the poles. Some might imitate the mother-ball, and throw off particles, which would revolve about themselves. The mother-ball is the sun ; the offspring are the planets ; and the second offspring are the satellites such as those of the Earth, Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus. Such is a slight sketch of Laplace's theory to explain the formation of the universe as it now is, from a prior state ; and this theory receives the countenance of a vast number of natural facts, and is directly contradicted by none. I shall mention some of the corroborative facts—

First : All the planets move in the same plane—and not the planets only, but all the stars, as though even not our sun, but some distant star were the great mother-ball.

Secondly : Our solar system is in motion towards a distant point in the stellar system.

Thirdly : This motion is from west to east ;—the same kind of motion which prevails in the rotation and revolution of every member of our solar system, which has been well studied.

Fourthly : The respective densities of the planets correspond in general to the theory of the increasing density of the central body. In decimals, the Earth's density being taken as unity, they stand thus ;—

Mercury.	Venus.	Earth.	Mars.	Jupiter.	Saturn.	Uranus.	Neptune.
2.95.	.99.	1.	.79	.23	.11	.26	.11

Here Uranus is the only exception to the rule, and not an important one.

Fifthly : The distances of the planets from the sun show such a regularity as might naturally be expected, if the universe were formed on Laplace's theory. It has been found that, if we place the following line of numbers,—

0.	3.	6.	12.	24.	48.	96.	192.
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and add four to each, we shall have a series denoting the respective distances of the planets from the sun. It will stand thus—

4.	7.	10.	16.	28.	52.	100.	196.	388.
Mercury.	Venus.	Earth.	Mars.	Asteroids.	Jupiter.	Saturn.	Uranus.	Neptune.

It will be observed that the first row of figures goes

on from the second on the left hand in a series of duplications, or multiplications by 2. There is here a signification of unity in the solar system. It was remarked, when this relation was first detected that there was wanting a planet corresponding to 28 : the difficulty was afterwards considered as overcome, by the discovery of small planets revolving nearly at the place of 28, between Mars and Jupiter. A similar relation prevails in the distances of the four satellites of Jupiter and the eight of Saturn from their respective planets.

Sixthly : The distances bear an equally interesting mathematical relation to the times of the revolutions round the sun. With respect to any two planets, *the squares of the times of revolutions are to each other in the same proportion as the cubes of their mean distances*. The general relations of the diameter, density, and times of rotation of the different planets, all go to confirm the theory of Laplace.

Seventhly : The earth having the shape, which it would have taken in a soft condition, and which it could not taken naturally, if its surface had been as hard as it is now, must have been soft when it took its present shape. If it was soft, it must have been under the influence of either fire or water. No scientific man will assert that it was under the influence of water : while there are many reasons for believing that it was under the influence of heat. The primitive rocks—that is, the rocks which underlie the surface of the whole earth, and which as Geologists inform us, furnished, by their decomposition, the material for all the stratified rocks—were evidently formed under the influence of fire. The crystallization of granite is similar to that of rocks which are melted now-a-days in great heat and left to cool. If we admit that the earth was once in a melted condition, we can scarcely hesitate longer to receive Laplace's theory. It is probable, too, that the formation of mountains can be more easily and reasonably explained on this theory than on any other.

Eighthly : There are various reasons for believing that the interior of the earth is now at a high heat. The temperature is known to increase as we leave the surface ; the volcanoes are evidences that there is fire beneath them ; and earthquakes show that only the surface of the globe is hard.

Ninthly : It would be reasonable to expect that if the interior of the earth were cold and composed of such matter as we find near the surface, the specific gravity of the whole body would be at least ten times that of water ; but we know that it is only five and a half times heavier than that element ; and this fact may be explained by supposing the interior to be expanded by intense heat.

In the *tenth* place, the remains of tropical plants and animals, found in what are now the temperate and frigid zones, show that the earth was once much warmer in those latitudes than it now is ; and the most reasonable explanation for this fact is that the whole earth was once much warmer than at present ; and the best explanation for a heat, greater than that of to-day, is to be found in Laplace's theory.

Justice to this theory would require a large book, and an astronomer—a great astronomer—to write it neither of which are at my disposal. But most of the probabilities, for and against, are matters of common knowledge ; and every one can venture to pass an opinion upon facts which are admitted by all parties to be correct, and to contain all the material information possessed even by the most learned, upon the question under consideration. Our knowledge cannot be said to be sufficient to establish the theory, but we know enough to make its truth appear extremely probable ; more particularly, when we remember that it has nothing to contend against, except the letter of a book compiled from Jewish fables, written by unknown authors in a barbarous age. I say it has nothing else to contend against—for the want of perfect regularity in the increase of the size, distance, weight, and speed of revolution and rotation of the planets, and the apparent reverse motion of the Satellites of Uranus, are “nothings” compared with the grauder corroborative facts.

§ 55. Many naturalists declare that the animal creation was not made by supernatural power exercised in successive *flats*, calling forth fishes and birds one day, reptiles and terrestrial brutes on the next day, and man on another day, but that the whole kingdom was produced under the unassisted influence of the forces and laws which exist in the mineral kingdom. It is asserted that insects have been

produced from inanimate matter under the action of electricity, but the assertion is rejected by many scientific men of reputation, and I shall not insist upon it. No man then, I may say, has ever witnessed the generation of an animal, except by its like, by parents of its own kind. Christians demand where is our experience for the generation of animals from minerals under mere natural laws ! Without any corroborative experience shall we believe it to be probable that mud produced a worm, as it would a crystal, and that the worm developed itself, until it became a fish ; that the fish grew toward a higher form, until it became a reptile ; that the reptile in time got warm blood, and limbs, and feathers, and became a bird ; that the bird changed its wings into arms, its feathers into hair, its eggs into live offspring, and became a quadruped ; and that the quadruped grew at last into the highest form of animal development—a man ? For, such is substantially the naturalistic theory.

The naturalist replies to the supernaturalist : There was a time, as all philosophers admit, when there were no plants nor animals on the earth ; the animals, consequently, had a beginning. Then the question is whether their beginning was owing to a natural, or a supernatural cause ? The influence of a supernatural cause, known to be such, is not within any man's experience, while it is within every man's experience, that all natural phenomena occur under natural laws, and therefore, the probabilities are in favor of a natural origin of the animal kingdom. Miracles are not to be believed on mere presumptions.

Secondly : The elements of the animal kingdom are the same as in the mineral kingdom, and no force is found in the former radically different from those found in the latter, and the modes in which these forces act, are substantially the same.

Thirdly : The animal kingdom is not composed of individuals all alike, but of classes showing an ascending scale of development. The lowest are mere bags of jelly, without brain, heart, lungs, bones, or organs of generation. They are all stomach, have no sex, and propagate by buds, breaking in two, or by some similar process. Then come animals which live in houses, like oysters ; next are animals which have bones on their backs like crabs ; then

animals with backbones, like fish—the scales being sometimes similar to the crab's shell. The fish has a small brain, half a heart, cold blood, and organs of generation ; but he does not copulate. The female drops her eggs, and the male drops his fluid into the sea, and if the two meet, fish are produced ; but not, if not. The reptile has more brain, more sex, and lungs, whereas the fish had mere gills. The bird has more brain, more lungs, more heart, warm blood, and in every way is a much more complicated animal than the serpent. The quadruped is still higher ; and last comes the man, with double heart, warm blood, immense brain, great lungs, erect stature, and grasping hands. In these various grades of being, the higher seem as much placed on the lower, as in a brick wall one course appears to rest upon another. Among the animals, however, the different courses cannot be distinguished from each other. Zoologists cannot agree as to what a "species" is. Black parents sometimes have white children ; the woolly dog of the arctic becomes a very different animal at the equator, in the course of a few generations. Besides, even the great classes are not to be clearly distinguished ; there are the flying fish, the bat, the eel, the ostrich, the whale, the ornithorynchus, and many others which partake of the nature of two classes. The frog is a fish at first, and the butterfly is a worm before it becomes an insect.

Fourthly: Every plant and animal is formed, by the gradual collection about a centre, of "cells"—very minute eggs, or balls of animal fluid, enclosed in a skin. At first, the cell gives no indication to the microscope, to what kind of animal it is to belong—whether to a worm, or a quadruped. In fact, the most skilful naturalist cannot distinguish whether it belongs to a plant, or an animal—to a mushroom, or a man. "By degrees", says Draper, "as the development goes on, that point is determined, and so one after another, the unfolding mass gradually reveals the class, order, family, genus, species, and finally its sex and individual peculiarities."

Fifthly: The knowledge of man in regard to the animal creation, is not confined to the events which have occurred since men existed on the earth. The history of the animal kingdom is written in the great book of geology, whereof

the leaves are great strata of rocks, laid down millions of years ago. These leaves, when now brought to the light, show the pictures of monsters, which reigned over the earth in the early ages—differing in many important particulars from any animal now in existence. In these rocks we find that the lowest classes of animals existed first, gradually ascending, step by step, to man. The animal kingdom may be divided into six main classes—*first* : backboneless animals (*invertebrata*) ; *secondly* : fish ; *thirdly* : reptiles ; *fourthly* : birds ; *fifthly* : mammalian quadrupeds ; and *sixthly* : mankind. Now, geology asserts that these classes were not introduced upon the earth at one time, or the highest first, but one by one, beginning at the lowest. The backboneless had the world to themselves for thousands of years ; then the fish came in addition, and so on. “There is geologic evidence”, said Hugh Miller, and he would not have said it, if he could have helped himself, for it does not agree with his theory, “that in the course of creation [as he called it] the higher orders succeeded the lower. The fish seems most certainly to have preceded the reptile ; the reptile and the bird to have preceded the mammiferous quadruped, and the mammiferous quadruped to have preceded man.”

Sixthly : Animals in their growth appear to go through the conditions of the lower classes. Those “which * occupy the highest stations in each series, possess at the commencement of their existence, forms exhibiting a marked resemblance to those presented in the permanent conditions of the lowest animals of the same series ; and that during the progress of their development, they assume in succession the character of each tribe, corresponding to their consecutive order in the ascending chain.” This fact is strangely illustrated in the history of the human brain. “It first † becomes a brain, resembling that of a fish ; then it grows into the form of that of a reptile ; then into that of a bird ; then into that of a mammiferous quadruped ; and finally it assumes that of a man, thus comprising in its foetal progress an epitome of geological history, as if man were in himself a compendium of all animated nature, and of kin to every creature of lives.”

* DR. ROGER. Bridgewater Treatise.

† AGASSIZ.

The Human race is divided into five varieties—the Negro, Malay, American, Mongolian and Caucasian ; varieties which are not all on the same level, but on a regularly ascending grade. The Caucasian child has to pass through all these varieties, as he had to pass through all the lower orders, before he sees the light. “One* of the earliest points, in which ossification commences, is the lower jaw. This bone is consequently sooner completed than the other bones of the head, and acquires a preëminence, which, as is well known, it never loses in the Negro. During the soft, pliant state of the bones of the skull, the oblong form which they naturally assume, approaches nearly the permanent shape of the Americans. At birth, the flattened face, and broad, smooth forehead of the infant, the position of the eyes rather towards the side of the head, and the widened space between, represent the Mongolian form, while it is only as the child advances to maturity that the oval face, the arched forehead, and the marked features of the true Caucasian become perfectly developed.” “The† leading characters, in short, of the various races of mankind, are simply representations of particular stages in the development of the highest or Caucasian type. The Negro exhibits permanently the imperfect brain, projecting lower jaw, and slender, bent limbs, of a Caucasian child, some considerable time before the period of its birth. The aboriginal American presents the same child nearer birth. The Mongolian is an arrested infant newly born. The beard, that peculiar attribute of maturity, is scanty in the Mongolian, and scarcely exists in the Americans and Negroes.”

When we consider these facts, and remember that there is no discoverable matter or force in the animal kingdom, different from those of the mineral domain, we are tempted to ask, did not the animal kingdom grow by the same gradual development, according to mere natural laws, as marks the growth of every natural object, whose history is known to us? We have no cause to believe that the same or similar forces which govern the formation of crystals, might not suffice to produce animal life. “No reasonable

* LOMB'S Popular Physiology.

† Vestiges of Creation.

ground* has yet been adduced for supposing that if he [the Chemist] had the power of bringing together the elements of any organic compound, in their requisite states and proportions, the result would be any other than that which is found in the living body. Every fresh discovery is tending to break down the barrier between the two classes of organic and inorganic bodies, as far as regards their chemical combination." "The† transition from an inanimate crystal to a globule [an animal cell] capable of such endless organic and intellectual development, is as great a step—as unexplained a one—as unintelligible to us—and, in any sense of the word, as miraculous as the immediate creation and introduction upon earth of every species and every individual [of the animal kingdom] would be"; and we are led by all analogy to suppose that, as Sir John Herschel says, "the origination of fresh species [of animals] could it ever come under our cognizance, would be found to be a natural, in contradistinction to a miraculous process." How animal life began, and how it progressed from the worm to the fish, from the fish to the snake, from the snake to the bird, from the bird to the quadruped, and from the quadruped to the man, is not clear, but that it did so progress, is certain; and there is much cause to suppose that it progressed by some kind of parental relation.

I shall venture to be guilty of a little repetition in attempting to support and elucidate (though in a very brief manner) the theory of the development of all organic bodies by natural generation from inorganic matter. This theory indeed, appears to me to be one of those grand discoveries which deserve to be classed with the law of gravitation. This latter principle really contains no grander conception than Laplace's teaching of the formation of the universe, or the theory now under consideration. The author of the latest work on Physiology, a writer of reputation as a man of literary abilities and scientific attainments on both sides of the Atlantic, has the honor to be the first person of authority—at least among the Anglo-Saxons—who has declared publicly in favor of the law of development. He says‡:—

* CARPENTER.

† SIR JOHN HERSCHEL. Address to the British Association. 1845.

‡ J. W. DRAPER. Physiology, pp. 466, 489, 506, 507.

“The organic series, an expression which is full of significance and full of truth, for it implies the interconnection of all organic forms,—the organic series is not the result of numberless creative blunders, abortive attempts or freaks of nature. It presents a far nobler aspect. Every member of it, even the humblest plant, is perfect in itself. From a common origin, a simple cell, all have risen ; there is no perceptible microscopic difference between the primordial vesicle which is to produce the lowest plant, and that which is to produce the highest ; but the one under the favoring circumstances to which it has been exposed, has continued on the march of development ; the career of the other has been stopped at an earlier point. The organic aspect at last assumed is the strict representation of the physical agencies which have been at work. Had these for any reason varied, that variation would at once have been expressed in the resulting form, which is therefore, actually, a geometrical embodiment of the antecedent physical conditions.* * * * All animals, no matter what position they occupy in the scale of nature, unquestionably arise in the first instance from a cell, which possessing the power of giving birth to other cells, a congeries at last arise, the size and form of which is determined wholly by external circumstances. In all cases the material, from which these cells are formed, is obtained from without ; and whatever the essential shape of the structure may be, the first cell is in all cases alike. There is no perceptible difference between the primordial cell which is to produce the lowest plant, and that which is to evolve itself into the most elaborate animal.* * The germ which is to produce a lichen, obtains from the materials around it, the substance it wants, as best it may ; but the germ which is to end in the development of man is brought in succession, under the influence of many distinct states. As a consequence of this, it gives rise in succession to a series of animated forms, which, assuming by degrees a higher complexity, end at last in the perfect human being.* * * * Starting from a solitary cell, development takes place, and according as extraneous forces may be brought into action, variable in their nature, and differing in their intensity, the resulting organism will differ. If such language may be used, the

aim of nature is to reach a certain ideal model, or archetype. As the passage toward this ideal model is more or less perfectly accomplished, form after form, in varied succession, arises. The original substratum or material, is in every instance alike ; for it matters not what may be the class of animals or plants, the primordial germ, as far as investigation has gone, is, in every instance, the same. The microscope shows no difference but, on the contrary, demonstrates the identity of the first cell, which if it passes but a little ways on its forward course, ends in presenting the obscure cryptogamic plant, or if it runs forward towards reaching the archetype, ends in the production of man.* * * * Thus, man himself passes through a great variety of forms, from the condition of a simple cell ; these forms merging by degrees into one another, the form of a serpent, of a fish, of the bird, and this not only as regards the entire system in the aggregate, but also as regards each one of its constituent mechanisms—the nervous system, the circulatory, the digestive. Now, in the passage onward these forms are to be regarded, as has been well expressed, each one as the scaffolding by which the next is built ; and just as man in his embryonic transit presents these successive aspects on the small scale, so does the entire animal series present them, in the world, on a great scale.* * The manifestations of this plan are not limited to the forms now existing, but also include those presented by the ancient geological times. These views cast a flood of light not only on the relation of the various races of life to one another, but also of the human family to them, illustrating the course through which man has hitherto passed, and indicating that, through which in future ages he is to go”.

It seems to me quite as absurd to suppose that the facts of the development of man from a cell similar to that of a mushroom, and his passage through the conditions of worm, fish, snake, bird, dog, and even apparently of ape, for the bones of a tail are found at the extremity of his back bone—and the gradual progress of the animal kingdom to higher forms as shown in the rock-record—it seems to me quite as absurd to suppose these facts to be without meaning, as to suppose the remains of animals, found by Geologists, to signify nothing more than mere gambols of nature—the

sportive creations of an anthropomorphic Omnipotence who turned out the universe complete from his lathe in six days, and threw in the fossils by way of ornamental carving.

It deserves to be considered as a strong confirmatory evidence of the development theory that the animal and vegetable kingdoms appear to be composed of a multitude of provinces, the inhabitants of which are indigenous—which were born and bred on *that* soil. One miraculous creation at a given point, whence all kinds of animals and vegetables were distributed, will not suffice to account for the phenomena of nature—even twenty such miraculous creations will not suffice ; and, of course, the improbabilities of a miraculous influence increase with the number of distinct miracles necessary to explain the known facts. “ When the naturalists* of modern times began to inquire into the geographical distribution of plants and animals, they quickly found that the prevalent notion of their dispersion from one common centre was untenable. From facts observed by them they have latterly concluded that, so far from this being the case, there are many provinces of the earth’s surface occupied by plants and animals almost wholly peculiar, and which must accordingly have had a separate origin. Professor Henslow of Cambridge [England] speaks of no fewer than forty-five such provinces for the vegetable kingdom alone.

“ A botanical or zoölogical province is generally isolated in some manner,—either as an island in the midst of a wide ocean,—as for example, St. Helena or the Isle de Bourbon,—or as a portion of a continent, separated from the rest, either by a range of high mountains or by the boundaries of a climate. It is also found that elevation of position comes to the same effect with regard to vegetation as advance in latitude ; so that as we ascend a lofty mountain in a tropical country, we gradually pass through zones, exhibiting the plants of kinds appropriate to temperate and arctic regions. Even the neighborhood of a salt-marsh, no matter how remotely placed amongst grounds of a different kind, exhibits plants appropriate to such a soil.

“ Fewer distinct zoölogical regions are enumerated, but perhaps only in consequence of imperfect observation. Here,

* Vestiges of Creation.

however, the evidence against communication of organisms from one region to another are even more decided. If, however, it were surmised that the organisms of isolated regions had been communicated from other countries, and merely modified in their new abodes, the disproof of the conjecture would be more positive with regard to the zoölogy of the question than the botany. For while it might appear possible that seeds have been floated even five hundred miles to a new soil like that of the Isle de Bourbon, how can we account, by such a supposition for the existence there of bats, reptiles and other animals, the progenitors of which could never have swum so far for the sake of a change of residence? This island he it remarked is of volcanic origin, and known to have become dry land at a comparatively recent period.

“The two great continents of the earth are the first zoölogical divisions of its surface. The animals as well as the plants of the Old and New world are specifically different, with very few exceptions; that is, they are different in the degree which naturalists agree to consider as sufficient to establish distinct species. But even North and South America present different animals. We also find that the animals in the north and south of Asia are different, and that most of the African species are distinct from those of Asia.

“The differences are in some instances so great as to be held by naturalists to be generic. Beyond this point, however, there are parities or identities. We see, for instance, in all these various regions, feline animals, ruminants, pachiderms [thick-skins], rodents [gnawers], &c. Thus, for the lion and tiger of Asia, we have a different lion and panther of Africa, the jaguar in South America, and the puma ranging from Brazil to Canada. Instead of the elk of Northern Europe and the argali of Siberia, we have in North America the moose deer and the mountain sheep. Asia and Africa have elephants, to which the extinct mammoth and mastodon of Northern Europe and North America are parallels: and it now appears that even the horse, of which there are several varieties in the Old world, was abundant in the New, at a period long antecedent to the introduction of the present breed by the colonists. Aus-

tralia has its emu, Africa its ostrich, and America her rhea, all similar animals, though specifically different.

“We find simiæ (monkey-kind) planted in three great regions,—Southern Asia, Western Africa, and Equinoctial America, but all of different character; those of America being peculiarly distinct in the want of the opposable thumb, and of callosities in the seat, as also in the use of the tail as a prehensile instrument. Australia has only a few very unimportant mammalian animals of her own, beside the marsupials, [pouched], which are represented by a few species in America; but to the southern part of the latter continent are confined the whole family of the sloths. Africa, in like manner, has exclusive possession of the giraffe. To Northern America belongs a great number of genera of birds quite peculiar to it, and also a great number and variety of the rodents than are to be found in any other parts of the earth”. Some distinguished naturalists hold that different races of men are indigenous in different continents, but the point is disputed with some show of reason on account of man’s being a great traveller by nature, and I pass it over. The generally received scientific theory, as above-stated in regard to the plants and lower animals, is irreconcilable with the plain meaning of *Genesis* which implies a dispersion from a centre, or a similar or simultaneous creation throughout the earth.

But whether men grew to be men from worms, developed through fishes, snakes, birds, quadrupeds, and apes, or whether a miraculous personal creator makes the human fœtus to pass through those stages merely to “harden the hearts” of materialist physiologists—this much is certain; the Mosaic cosmogony is wrong in asserting that the fish and fowl were made in the same day or period (*Gen. I. 20–23*), and that the quadruped, snake, and man were made in another subsequent day or period (*Gen. I. 24–31*). Here are five classes, mixed together in two periods, in utter defiance of geology and zoology. That the earth was made before any of the other great bodies of the universe, that it required five days for its construction, while all the stars and planets were rough-hewn in one day—that the sun, moon, and stars were made only for the purpose of marking time and giving light to the earth (*Gen. I. 14*), and that light

was made two days before sun, moon, and stars (*Gen. I. 4. 5. 14-19*), are assertions so notoriously false and absurd, that my only task here in endeavouring to throw discredit on the Bible, is to draw attention to the fact that they are contained in it.

§ 56. According to *Genesis*, Heaven is a blue arch, in which the sun, moon, and stars are placed, and, beyond all these, there is a stock of water, used as a reservoir when rain is necessary. Jehovah made "a firmament in the midst of the waters," and it "divided the waters which were *under* the firmament, from the waters which were *above* the firmament," and he "called the firmament 'Heaven'" and he placed the planets as lights "*in* the firmament" (*Gen. I. 6. 7. 8. 14. 17*). David has similar notions of astronomy. He asserts by divine inspiration that the Jehovah founded the earth "upon the seas, and established it upon the floods" (*Ps. XXIV. 2*), so that "it should not be removed forever" (*Ps. CIV. 5*) while the sun is a great traveller—for "his going forth is from the end of the heaven and his circuit unto the ends of it" (*Ps. XIX. 6*). The same David says that the said Jehovah "stretched out the earth above the waters" (*Ps. CXXXVI. 6*), and calls upon the "waters that be *above* the heavens" to praise him (*Ps. CXLVIII 4*). When Joshua wanted more daylight to assist him in the pious work of massacring the God-forsaken Amorites, he did not stop the earth, but stopped the sun "upon Gibeon" and the moon "in the valley of Ajalon" and they stopped without any hesitation, until he saw fit to tell them to "go a-head" again.

There was no rain, as *Genesis* says, on the earth for sixteen hundred years, after it was inhabited by men; for the rainbow was not seen before the flood, and the qualities of light and water being the same in all ages, it follows that there must have been no rain, since there was no rainbow. What became of all the moisture drawn from the earth by evaporation during this long period, and what became of the plants and animals, which now could not exist twelve months without rain, is not explained. Probably, the moisture collected "above the firmament" to increase the grand stock there which was poured out at the flood.

Man ate no meat for sixteen hundred years, if we are

to believe Moses. In Paradise Jehovah said to Adam "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in it which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat" (*Gen. I. 29*). After the flood, Jehovah said to Noah "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herbs have I given you all things" (*Gen. IX. 3*).

Carnivorous animals, the same which we now have, ate no meat until after the flood. On the sixth day of Creation Jehovah said "To every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat" (*Gen. I. 30*). Jehovah ordered Noah to take only two of each kind of animals into the Ark, and since they remained in the Ark ten months, the animals could not have preyed upon each other without destroying many races (*Gen. VI. 19. 20*). Noah was specially ordered to lay in a supply of food, which, it is evident from the terms used, was composed entirely of vegetables (*Gen. VI. 21*). It is not stated by Moses, at what time animals began to prey upon each other, but we may presume that, according to his theory, it was immediately after the flood, when man became a carnivorous animal. How the lions, tigers, eagles, cranes, and all those animals which now live on animal food only, managed to get along in eating grass, is not very clear to us. Their teeth and stomachs are unfitted for masticating or digesting vegetable food, and if Moses had understood this, he would either not have asserted that they fed only on herbs, or he would have explained, how their natures have since then changed. And yet we know that there were carnivorous animals, which really did *eat* other animals, thousands of years before the flood, for we find their stomachs and excrements in the rocks.

The Mosaic myth goes on to state that the first human pair were sinners, but were seduced by the snake, which "was more subtile than any other beast of the field." Woman was the first to be seduced, and in punishment she was condemned to give birth to children in pain. She brutes are subject to similar pains, but we are not told what their sin was. The naughty serpent was punished by

a curse that it and all its kind should forever go upon their bellies, and eat dust and be hated by man. Did the snakes in Paradise go upon feet or walk upright upon their tails? If they went on their bellies before the temptation, what was the punishment? If they did not go on their bellies, were they snakes? Snakes do not eat dust now, neither are they universally hated. The Egyptians worshipped the asp for many ages.

Men before the deluge lived sometimes to be nine hundred and fifty years old, and generally to the age of about seven hundred. The cause of this longevity is to be found in the fact that the Ante-diluvians were all "Grahamites."

After men had increased for seventeen hundred years, Jehovah became so angry at their sins, that he sent a great deluge to cover the whole earth (*Gen. VI. VII. 19, 22*), and kill all men and animals, except a few of each species, which were preserved in an Ark. How the Ark floated or the animals lived above the tops of the highest mountains, where the most intense and fatal cold now prevails constantly, is not explained. If the animals which inhabit the arctic and the torrid zones were now to be carried to Mount Ararat, many races would expire in a very short time on account of the change of climate. It is not explained how it was possible for a pair of every species of animal to live for months in an Ark, scarcely large enough to hold them, if packed as tightly as pickled pork; and that Ark provided with only one window. Neither is it explained what became of the water, for there is not enough now to cover the mountains. Though the water stood upon the earth for ten months, above the tops of the highest mountains, the trees apparently were still flourishing several miles down below. The dove found a fresh olive leaf. Trees now-a-days are not so tough in their vitality.

A flood occurred 2300 B. C. which destroyed the whole human race save one family, and since the waters covered the whole earth for a year, they must have destroyed all the previous works of men. The geologists deny that there ever was a universal deluge. The ethnologists say that the various races of men, with the same general peculiarities of form, color, hair, and mental capacity existed thousands of

years before the alleged date of the flood, as they have now. The Egyptologists assert that they have found monuments in the valley of the Nile, which were undoubtedly erected, at least as early as, 3500 B. C. Lepsius, who is recognized as the best authority on the chronology of the Egyptians, carries his record back to 3800 B. C., at which time there was already an extensive and powerful empire in the land of "Khem" as the natives called it. Among those who assert the great antiquity of the Egyptian empire, are Champollion, Bunsen, Bœckh, Barrucchi, Kenrick, Lepsius, and Gliddon, and no one who has investigated the subject, has dared to defend the chronology of the common version of the Jewish Scriptures. Milman regrets "that the chronology of the earlier Scriptures should ever have been made a religious question". What? Would he have Christians admit at once that Jehovah inspired Moses to write what was not true? And that he afterwards inspired Luke to confirm the account of Moses by copying the lineal forefathers of Jesus up to Adam, so that there is no possibility of dodging the plain meaning of the words? Brother Milman is an admirable man, but a poor Christian after the orthodox model. If his Gospel says that lions ate grass in Paradise, it is his place to swear to it, without making a wry face.

The varieties of human languages were caused by a miraculous decree of Jehovah, on the occasion of an attempt of mankind, soon after the flood, to erect a great tower reaching to heaven, in which they should find protection against any future deluge. Jehovah was enraged at the impiety, and smote the laborers with a confusion of tongues, so that they could not understand each other. Philologists have proved beyond a doubt, that nearly all the different tongues have been changed or corrupted by natural processes from a few stocks. Thus the Sanscrit, Arabic, Greek, Latin, and German are all akin, and are the offspring of a language spoken in Central Asia four or five thousand years ago, as English, French, Spanish and Italian have been produced from a mixture and corruption of the Latin and Teutonic tongues.

Adelung, whose *Mithridates* is styled in the London *Encyclopedia* "the most extensive and profound work on

the subject of languages that has ever yet been issued from the European press", says : "The idea must be given up that language was communicated to the first men by their Creator, or that they were taught the use of articulate words by angels, or superior intelligences. There was a time, when mankind was but little superior to the brutes, when they crept upon the earth—a dumb and debased race. This is a proposition which, on a little reflection, offers itself to the mind as a first principle, and requires no proof. It is true that, when we consider the artificial and complicated structure of a European language, which is capable of expressing all the shades of thought and sentiment that arise in civilized society, and of representing all the metaphysical reasonings of a Plato, or a Voltaire, the production of so wonderful a contrivance seems beyond the reach of human faculties. But so also, a European war-ship, which, with a burden of 2500 tons, and bearing 1000 men and 100 cannon, rides triumphantly through the ocean, and defies the rage of conflicting elements, would appear to the wondering eyes of a naked savage as a phenomenon altogether supernatural, and it would be impossible for him to conceive that such a work was produced by the hands of his fellow-creatures. But if he were to trace the art of a modern ship-builder backwards, through all its stages, to the fragile raft, or the primitive log which had been felled by fire, and on which the first trembling barbarian committed himself to the unstable element, his astonishment would gradually subside, and the supernatural being created by his imagination, would gradually dwindle into a simple man. The case is similar, when we inquire into the history and progress of language. It only requires a little observation to discover the stage of its advancement, and to trace it backwards to the first articulate sounds uttered by the uncouth child of nature. Even when we examine attentively the whole fabric in its complete form, we discover clear vestiges of its homely beginning. The language, which flows from the mouth of a Cicero, or a Newton, still bears the traces of those infant ages of the world, when men referred all the movements of external nature to the same voluntary power of which they were conscious within themselves, when they fancied that the wind blows, that the sun goes down, and

that the ocean roars, and when, with similar ignorance, they feigned mountains and rivers to be males and females."

The *Pentateuch* gives us to understand that Adam and Eve spoke Hebrew, and that it was taught to them by Jehovah himself, who always used it in conversing with his favorites. But we know that the Hebrew was not an original language: it bears the same marks as many other languages of having been formed from old and rude dialects. The Hebrew language had its origin, not among the Hebrews, but among the Phœnicians, from whom the Jews learned it after entering Canaan. It is an incontestable historical fact that the Phœnicians had already a well-established nationality and language long before the alleged date of Abraham, and that their language was substantially the same with that of the Jews, is proved by an abundance of evidence. It is absurd to suppose that sixty-six persons and their descendants, enslaved for four hundred years in Egypt, could have preserved their original tongue, or avoided, adopting that of their masters; and it is equally absurd to suppose that, if they had preserved it, the Phœnicians would have learned it from them, and abandoned their own. Although it is nowhere distinctly stated in the *Bible* that the Hebrew was the original language in Paradise, yet it is implied; and therefore, the Bible is guilty of an implied falsehood.

If the ante-diluvian history of mankind, and the account of the deluge be correct, it is singular that the names of Adam, Eve, and Noah were known only to the Jews. How is it that the older and more civilized nations knew nothing of such matters, which, by their very nature, must have been among the most interesting facts which men could know—regarding a subject on which many ancient nations had a great many speculations and traditions?

CHAPTER X.

FABULOUS HISTORY.

"Gulliver is the most entertaining book of travels I ever read, but there are some things in it which I can not believe." IRISH CURATE.

§ 57. A great many fables are inserted in the Bible as historically true. I shall have room to notice only a few of them.

According to *Genesis*, there was between Adam and Shem a period of 1658 years, and in this time there were eleven generations averaging 150 years each. From Arphaxad to Isaac was 490 years, with ten generations of 49 years each. Between Jacob and David, a period of 956 years, there were eleven generations of 86 years each on an average, showing a wonderful increase in the length of the generations subsequent to Isaac. During this latter period, we have not the years of each generation, as we have during all the rest of the time from Adam down to 600 B. C. Moses says (*Ps. XC.*) that in his day, the utmost limit of human life was 80 years.

From Solomon to Christ was a period of 1000 years; and of thirty-nine generations of 26 years each on an average, according to Matthew, and of fifty-three generations, with 19 years each, on an average, according to Luke. Moses says (*Gen. XLVII. 9*) that Jacob was 130 years old, when he entered Egypt, and that the Israelites were 430 years in Egypt, (*Ex. XII. 40, 41*), but Paul asserts (*Gal. III. 17*) that the time between the call of Abraham and the departure from Egypt was 430 years. Paul is evidently wrong.

According to the book of *Kings* (*1 K. VI. 1.*), it was 480 years after the exodus that the Temple was commenced. The martyr Stephen, whose words are quoted in the *Acts* (*XIII. 21*) as of inspired authority said that Saul reigned 40 years. David reigned 40 years (*1 K. II. 11*); and

Solomon reigned 4 years before beginning the temple ; and thus we have 966 years from the birth of Jacob to the building of the Temple, in the year 1011 B. C. In Acts (*XIII. 20.*) it is said, there were judges over Israel for 450 years, and yet there were only six generations among the forefathers of David, during that time.

Although the period, during which the Jews remained in Egypt is given as about four hundred years, yet so far as we can learn by the inspection of the different genealogies of the royal and priestly families of Israel, contained in their Scriptures, there were not more than three or four generations during that time. Moses was the grand-son of Kohath, who went with Jacob to Egypt (*1 Ch. VI. 1, 2. Gen. XLVI. 11*) ; and among his contemporaries were Korah another grand-son of Kohath, (*Num. XVI. 1*), and Nashon, the great-grand-son of Pharez, who also went down with Jacob. We learn even that Achan, who lived in the time of Joshua, and was still young enough to serve as a soldier, was a grand-son of this same Pharez (*Josh. VII. 13 1 Ch. II. 7. IV. 1*). A multitude of other instances might be adduced of persons, living in or after the time of Moses, who were the grand-sons or great-grand-sons of members of Jacob's family when he went down to the land of the Pharaohs. The language of *Erodus* gives us plainly to understand that there were only three kings upon the throne, during the time the Israelites were in the land. After Joseph's death, a new king arose who had not known him and who enslaved the Jews (*Ex. I. 6-11*). "And in process of time, it came to pass that the King of Egypt died" (*Ex. II. 23*) ; and under his successor, Moses appeared and led his people away. And yet we are seriously told that, in the course of these three or four generations, the seventy Israelites, who had entered Egypt, had increased to more than 3,000,000, having 603,550 fighting men (*Num. I. 46. 47.*), exclusive of the tribe of Levi, one twelfth of the nation. Jehovah must have given them a most miraculous fertility, in comparison with which all the wonders of propagation, that have happened in modern times, are mere trifles. If my arithmetic does not deceive me, such an increase would require that every Jewish woman should have given birth to 70 daughters, each one of whom lived,

and gave birth to as many again. The thirty-five women, who went to Egypt, must have had in all 2450 children, who begot 84,750 of the same generation with Moses, and the next generation numbered 2,966,250. The women were kept busy in those times ! But it is rather inconsistent with this theory of every woman, having 140 children, that in the first chapter of *Chronicles*, where the genealogies of Israel with the names of the male children are given for eight or ten generations after Jacob, the women appear to have borne not more than six or eight children each on an average, and the names of the men who were contemporary with Moses or Joshua, instead of numbering 600,000, do not amount to 1,000.

It would have been indeed a singular thing, if seventy immigrants who were soon reduced to a bitter slavery, should in the course of three or four generations, have increased so as to outnumber the native inhabitants of a great empire, who were in possession of the most fertile and healthy portion of the kingdom : and who are known to us to have been an industrious, orderly, and prosperous people. The entire population of Egypt now is not 2,000,000, but in ancient times, it was greater, probably 5,000,000. If the Jews had 650,000 men, capable of bearing arms, they must have outnumbered the Egyptians, two to one : and we shall be as much perplexed to explain the decrease of the Egyptians as the increase of the Jews. Such a decrease of the natives or increase of foreign slaves is contradicted by the writings and monuments in the valley of the Nile, which throw much light on the condition of Egypt at the time of which Moses writes.

We read that after the Israelites were "more and mightier" than the Egyptians (*Ex. I. 9*) the King "Spake to the Hebrew midwives (of which the name of one was Shiprah, and the name of the other Puah :) and he said 'When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women and see them upon the stools : if it be a son, then ye shall kill him : but if it be a daughter, then she shall live'" (*Ex. I. 15. 16*). In the times when Jehovah managed the world, every thing was different from the present state of affairs. Two midwives now-a-days could not wait upon half a million of married women : nor would a king think

seriously of trusting to slave-women to murder children of their own tribe ; nor would the task of killing all the male children in a population of several millions be entrusted to a couple of persons, unsupported by any military force. The two midwives, as it seems, did not obey the command of the monarch, and Jehovah was so well pleased with their pious conduct " that he made them houses " (*Ex. I. 21.*) ; and for all we know may have given sticks of sugar candy to their children, and sung the Egyptian "Bobbing Around" and "Villikins and his Dinah," dancing and making faces meanwhile to amuse the darlings of those women who "feared God."

The chronology of the Bible requires us to believe that the Jews emigrated from Egypt about the year 1,500. B. C. The inscriptions and pictures on ancient Egyptian monuments make it probable that such a people as the Jews were enslaved in Egypt. This is admitted by nearly all those who have investigated the antiquities of that country. But the time of the emigration is not correctly given in the Bible. The *Pentateuch* does not contain the precise names of any of the Egyptian monarchs—Pharaoh being a general name for king, not the special name for a person : Such an omission—equivalent to that of writing a history of the American Revolution, without stating that the event occurred during the reign of George the Third—deprives us of confidence at once in the exactness of the story.

Besides this chronology depends upon the general statement that the period between the exodus and the building of the Temple was 480 years (*1 K. VI. 1*), and upon the confused tales in the book of *Judges*. But when we count the generations between Moses and Solomon, we find only about ten, which at the natural rate of 30 years for a generation, would place the exodus about 1320. B. C. And this estimate is confirmed by the Egyptian monuments and several probabilities, drawn from the Jewish books themselves.

Moses says that the Jews built the Egyptian cities of Ramses and Pythom. Now, these two cities were built at the ends of a canal, connecting the Nile with the Red Sea. This canal was commenced about 1400 B. C. and the cities were the natural consequence of the enterprise. At

this time Ramses the Great was King, and it was natural that a city, founded and built in his reign, should be named after him : while it would have been singular, if such a name had been given before a Ramses came to the throne. There had been no Ramses previous to 1500 B. C. The fact that Ramses was the local-god of this city—which is considered to be established by the sculptures, found at Abu Keschab—would indicate, according to Egyptian customs, that the city was built, during the reign of the great monarch of that name. Many other minor facts corroborate that indication. “The conclusion” says Lepsius who discusses the question very thoroughly—“The conclusion, that consequently the Jews, if they built these cities [of Ramses and Pythom] must have been in Egypt in the reign of Ramses, who commanded their construction, and could not have emigrated several centuries before, rests no longer on the identity of the name of a single city, which might be explained by the accidental inaccuracy of a historian, or by a confusion of dates, but on the connection of a number of facts which mutually support and explain each other.”

Besides “it is known and the monuments—yea even the almost-contemporary papyrus-rolls—confirm it in the completest manner, that Ramses-Miamun invaded and conquered a large part of Asia, and that he held under his dominion, for a long time—probably during his whole reign—particularly the neighboring lands, the Arabian peninsula and all Palestine. We see also his father, Sethos the First, engaged in victorious battles against the Syrians, among whom the Canaanites are expressly named, and who are pictured on the monuments. That was the most glorious period of Egyptian history. The silence of the books of *Joshua* and *Judges* of any such conquest, when compared with the particular mention of many shorter captivities which Israel suffered at the hands of the neighboring nations, appears to furnish additional evidence that those events occurred before the exodus.”

A study of the chronology of the Bible previous to the time of Solomon shows that little confidence is to be placed in it. The writers had no era from which they reckoned ; there is no evidence that the events were written down at the dates of the occurrences ; and the historical books are

marked by the characteristics which are found in the untrustworthy traditions of many other rude tribes. The dates are not inserted at the proper times and places : and when periods are mentioned, they are given in round numbers in a manner to show that little importance was attached to them. From Moses to Solomon a large proportion of the important periods are composed of forty years, or a multiple of forty, showing clearly the unhistoric notions of the writers. Moses was 80 years old at the exodus, and 120 when he died ; Saul, David, and Solomon reigned 40 years each : and the period from the exodus to the erection of the Temple was 480 years. Such a regularity might be credited, if recorded by persons cognizant of the facts and familiar with the importance of historical accuracy and the principles of historical criticism ; but the writers of the Bible certainly did not possess those qualifications.

From Isaac to Solomon, there were twelve generations : from Isaac to Azariah, Solomon's High Priest, there were eighteen generations : and from Isaac to Heman, Solomon's Levitical singer, there were twenty-two generations (1. *Ch.* VI) ; whence it appears that the holy Levites were better propagators before the Lord, than those who ate not of the fat of the sacrifices. We are told that Ezra (*Ezra VII.* 1-5) was only fourteen generations from Phineas, who was a priest in the time of Moses (1450 B. C.). This would give seventy years for a generation : and yet during less than one-half that period, there were twenty kings on the throne of Judah.

§ 58. " When, * according to the account, the two or three millions of Israelites left Egypt, they were accompanied by ' a mixed multitude who went along with them, and flocks, and herds, even an abundance of cattle ' (*Ex.* XII. 38). Yet this immense body is represented as having been collected, arranged and put in motion in a single day, in consequence of a hasty command of Pharaoh given the preceding night. The passover was slain on the fourteenth day of the month, which, according to the Jewish computation, ended at sunset. At midnight, that is on the fifteenth day, the first-born of the Egyptians were destroyed. The same night Pharaoh issued his order for the departure

* NORTON. Notes to Genuineness of the Gospels.

of the Israelites, and during the fifteenth day, they were on their march (*Ex. XII. Num. XXXIII. 3*). In what time could this nation of men, women, and children, with all their sick and aged, with their domestic animals, and their necessary baggage, have defiled, in the face of an enemy, through the Red Sea? According to the history, it was done in a single night. How long must it have taken such a multitude of men and cattle to quench the thirst of which they were perishing at the waters of Marah, or by those which gushed from the rock of Horeb? What extent of territory must have been covered by two or three millions of men encamped in tents among the rocky defiles, the mountainous and broken country around Sinai, or along the eastern shore of the Red Sea? From the history we should receive the impression that they were a body capable of being readily assembled, and orally addressed by Moses or Aaron; a body which could all be put in motion in the morning, accomplish a day's journey, and at night encamp in a particular place: as at 'Elim where there were twelve wells of water, and they encamped there by the waters' (*Ex. XV. 27*).

"The number of the Israelites, we are told, had alarmed one of the kings of Egypt. Before the birth of Moses, that is about eighty years before the Israelites left Egypt, or one hundred and thirty-five [at most three hundred and fifty] years after the family of sixty-six males entered it, the king is represented as saying 'Lo, the people of Israel are more numerous and stronger than we are; come let us wisely prevent their multiplying' (*Ex. I. 9. 10*). Being alarmed at their numbers, he resolved to provoke their most deadly and desperate hatred. He 'made their lives bitter' by reducing them to slavery; he issued an order for the destruction of all their male children. After an unsuccessful attempt fully to execute his latter purpose, this order is said to have assumed the following horrible form: 'Then Pharaoh charged all his people, saying every son that is born ye shall cast into the river' (*Ex. I. 22*). To outrage to the utmost a formidable nation, to exercise upon it an extravagance of cruelty, which no tribe of men, however feeble, would tamely endure, virtually to declare a war of extermination upon the Israelites in the most odious form

which war could assume, are the expedients that Pharaoh is represented as adopting through dread of their enmity. Nor is this the most extraordinary part of the history. The Israelites, as far as appears from it, submitted without resistance to be made slaves, and to have their infants murdered as a matter of common usage. The voice of human nature pronounces this to be impossible. No people was ever so far degraded below the brutes, who expose their own lives in defence of their young.

“ But the king is represented, at the same time, as in dread of their power, and fearful, lest they should withdraw themselves from Egypt, ‘ lest they should join his enemies, and by force of arms leave the country ’ (*Ex. I. 10*) ; and according to the narrative, one of his successors considered their remaining in Egypt as of so much importance, that he manifested the most insane obstinacy in refusing to permit their departure. It must have been only for their value as slaves that the kings of Egypt were so desirous to keep the Hebrews in their land. But how is this to be reconciled with an order for the destruction of their male children—that is for the gradual extermination of those Hebrew slaves, who were such valuable property, that supernatural inflictions of the most terrible kind were to be endured, or the hazard of them encountered, rather than that they should be suffered to quit the country.

“ When, at last, an order for their departure was extorted, we find them represented as leaving the country in such haste that they ‘ took their unleavened dough in the kneading vessels, wrapped up in their garments upon their shoulders ’ ; and during the first day’s journey ‘ baked unleavened cakes of the dough ’, ‘ for they were thrust out of Egypt, and they could not tarry ; nor had they prepared for themselves any provision ’ (*Ex. XII. 34. 39*). As we have before remarked, however, they carried with them ‘ flocks and herds, even an abundance of cattle ’ ; and they carried them into the desert which borders the Red Sea to the west, where no supply of herbage was to be found for their subsistence. Crossing the Red Sea, they commenced their march toward Mount Sinai, through a region of frightful sterility. In this desert, they journeyed for three days without water, and as would appear from the preced-

ing account, without food. At the end of the third day, they were furnished with sweet water by a miracle (*Ex. XV. 22–25*). What number had perished in the mean time, is not told. During their whole journeying and residence along the coast of the Red Sea, and in the desert of Sinai, where water for a few travellers is often difficult to be procured, we read of their having a miraculous supply only in one other instance (*Ex. XVII.*). Their sufferings from hunger, we are told, were great before their arriving at Sinai, and quails and manna were miraculously provided for their support (*Ex. XVI.*). Their cattle, of course, had perished, or been killed. The manna was continued for the whole forty years of their journeyings, till they came 'to an inhabited land'. Yet, before quitting their encampment around Sinai, they are again described as having an abundance of cattle for sacrifices, and of lambs for the passover, flour, oil, and wine, and a profusion of spices. Departing from Mount Sinai, they march through 'a great and terrible wilderness' (*Deut. I. 19*), the people complained, and wept, saying 'Who will give us flesh to eat?' and were again miraculously supplied with quails (*Num. XI.*). After this, their sufferings from want of water return; but their cattle are still alive, for they thus expostulate with Moses and Aaron: 'Why have ye brought the *people of God* into this wilderness, where both ourselves and our cattle must die?' (*Num. XX. 4*). Thus the whole nation of the Israelites, and not these only, but 'a mixed multitude who went with them' (*Ex. XII. 38*) are represented as remaining forty years in deserts, where they must have perished but for a constant miraculous supply of food; and as having at the same time herds of cattle, which, in their longings after flesh, they refrained from eating. The food of their cattle must also have been furnished by some astonishing miracle, of which the historian has supplied no account. Equally for men and beasts, an uninterrupted miraculous supply of water was necessary; but the supposition that such an uninterrupted supply was afforded, is precluded by the circumstance that four particular cases are specified in which it was given (*Ex. XV. 23. XVII. 1. Num. XX. 2. XXI. 16*). The Jewish Rabbis, though in general not apt to startle at absurdities, perceived this deficiency in their history, and

endeavored to supply it by a tradition, alluded to by St. Paul (1 *Cor.* X. 4) that the rock of Horeb, or the water which gushed from it, followed the Israelites in their wanderings.

"An incongruity, only less glaring, is found in the accounts of the wealth possessed by the Israelites, while encamped around Sinai, in gold, silver, brass, precious stones, fine linen of different colors, boards of setim wood, aromatics, and various other articles of luxury, and of their skill in different arts. They could have acquired neither their wealth nor their skill by their employment as slaves in Egypt in the making of bricks. Their skill, it may be said, was miraculously conferred. But this solution will not apply to the casting of the golden calf by Aaron. A part of their wealth, it may be said, that they procured from the Egyptians, from whom, before leaving Egypt, they asked and obtained 'utensils of silver, utensils of gold, and raiment' (*Ex.* XII. 35, 36). The story of their spoiling the Egyptians, in consequence of a divine direction, presents difficulties quite as serious as those which it may be brought forward to remove. But, however, great may have been the generosity of the Egyptians, in gifts of gold and silver, utensils and raiment, it will account only for part of the wealth of the Israelites, much of which consisted in other stores. Nor is any explanation to be given why the Israelites, who were removing such a profusion of articles of luxury into the desert, and who consequently had provided means for the conveyance of them, should have borne away in the hurry of their departure their yet unleavened dough in the kneading vessels upon their shoulders, and should have had no opportunity to provide any store of provisions for their own sustenance. If the Israelites possessed all those articles in the desert, they had, as I have said, means of transporting them. But such does not appear to have been the case. The camel is the only beast of burden which could have been used; and there is no mention of their possessing camels."

§ 59. A large portion of the incidents, recorded by the Evangelists as occurring to Jesus, appear, on a close examination, to be mythical in their nature. The Gospels were written at a considerable time, as we shall see in a

subsequent chapter (XXI), after the crucifixion. Jesus lived in a country where very few had a clear idea of what history is, and with those few he and his twelve apostles had no intercourse. So far as we know, no record was made, during his life, of his discourses or history. About a generation after his crucifixion, Jerusalem was destroyed, and the few people dispersed, whose recollections of Jesus might have furnished exact information, in regard to his life, to a historian, or have furnished means for the confutation of a mythic biography. In the course of time biographies appeared—most of them in distant countries—which are marked by the characteristics which are found in the myths of Greece, Rome, Hindostan, and Skandinavia. Actions are attributed to Jesus because like actions were recorded of historical persons, to whom he bore a resemblance—because such actions were expected from the Messiah, predicted in the Jewish books—and because such actions were supposed to be natural and necessary to Jesus, as the writers conceived him to be. Such a system of composition, though on a much smaller scale, is now in progress in regard to the life of the Mormon prophet, Jo. Smith, more particularly in regard to events which are supposed to have occurred, when no person now living was present—so that there is no possibility of contradiction, except on the general principles of philosophical evidence : and these are almost as little understood among the Mormons as among the disciples of Jesus. This mythic composition appears to us fraudulent : it does not appear so to the writers, who imagine that the addition of particulars, not improbable in themselves, and calculated to describe the character, and increase the glory, of their hero, must edify the Church, and promote the cause of true religion. The narratives of the miraculous conception of John the Baptist and Jesus, the annunciation, the visit of the wise men, the dispute of the child Christ with the doctors in the Temple, the miracles, the entrance into Jerusalem, the transfiguration, and the resurrection, are strongly marked with the peculiarities of the myth : and in many passages we are able not only to trace the myth back to a much earlier age, but we are also able to show its direct historical falsehood, in so far as Jesus is concerned. This subject

is one, the full elucidation of which cannot be summed up in a few general principles : but requires the particular examination of all the numerous myths in the Gospels : and I shall be compelled to confine my attention here to a few of the mythic passages.

And first of the miraculous conception of John the Baptist (*Luke I*). The events, here recorded, are not such as occur in the ordinary course of nature, and therefore cannot be strictly historical : and when we consider their nature and subject, they must be, if not historical, then mythic. The account was probably written by a Christian of the Jewish school, mainly for the purpose of magnifying the importance of Jesus, and possibly with a view of making proselytes among the followers of John, by exhibiting the relationship of the Baptist to the Christ as his peculiar and highest destiny : and also by holding out the expectation of a state of temporal greatness for the Jewish people at the reëpearance of the Christ.* An attentive consideration of the Old Testament histories, to which the annunciation and birth of John bear a striking affinity, will render it abundantly evident that this is a just view. But it must not be imagined that the author of our narrative first made a collection from the Old Testament of its individual traits ; much rather had the scattered traits respecting the late birth of different distinguished men, as recorded in the Old Testament, blended themselves into a compound image in the mind of their reader, whence he selected the features most appropriate to his present subject. Of the children born of aged parents, Isaac is the most ancient prototype. It is said of Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of John, that " they both were advanced in their days " ; so Abraham and Sarah were " advanced in their days " (*Gen. XVIII. 11*), when a son was promised to them. It is likewise from this history that the incredulity of the father, on account of the advanced age of both parents, and the demand of a sign, are borrowed in our narrative. As Abraham, when Jehovah promised that he shall have a son and a numerous posterity, who shall inherit the land of Canaan, doubtingly inquires

* The contents of the three succeeding pages are mostly taken from Strauss' *Life of Jesus*.

“Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it” (*Gen. XV. 8*); so Zacharias asks “Whereby shall I know this?” The incredulity of Sarah is not made use of for Elizabeth; but she is said to be of the daughters of Aaron, and the name Elizabeth, may perhaps have been suggested by that of Aaron’s wife (*Ex. VI. 23*). The incident of the angel, announcing the birth of the Baptist, is taken from the history of another later born child, Samson. In our narrative indeed, the angel appears first to the father in the Temple, whereas in the history of Samson, he shows himself first to the mother, and afterwards to the father in the field. This however, is an alteration, arising naturally out of the different situations of the respective parents (*Jud. XIII*). According to popular Jewish notions, it was no unusual occurrence for the priest to be visited by angels and divine apparitions, while offering incense in the Temple. The command which before his birth predestined the Baptist—whose later ascetic mode of life was known—to be a Nazarite, was taken from the same source. As to Samson’s mother, during her pregnancy, wine, strong drink, and unclean food were forbidden, so a similar diet is prescribed for her son, adding, as in the case of John, that the child shall be consecrated to God from the womb. The blessings which it is predicted that the people of Israel shall realize from these two men are similar (compare *Luke I. 16, 17* with *Jud. XIII. 5*): and each narrative concludes with the same expression concerning the hopeful growth of the child. It may be too bold to derive the Levitical descent of the Baptist from a third Old-Testament history of a late-born son,—Samuel (compare *I. S. I. 1*: and *I. Ch. VII. 27* with *Luke*); but the lyric effusions in the first chapter of the third Evangelist are imitations of this history. As Samuel’s mother, when consigning him to the care of the High Priest, breaks forth, in poetic fashion, into a hymn (*I. S. II. 1*), so the father of John does the same at the circumcision: though the particular expressions in the canticle uttered by Mary have a closer resemblance to Hannah’s song of praise than that of Zacharias. The significant appellation of John (dear to God), predetermined by the angel, had its precedent in the announcements of the names of Isaac and Ishmael (*Gen. XVI. 11*).

XVII. 19) : but the ground of its selection was the apparently providential coincidence between the signification of the name and the historical destination of the man. The remark that the name of John was not in the family (*Luke I. 61*), only brought its celestial origin more fully into view. The tablet upon which the father wrote the name (*v. 63*), was necessary on account of his incapacity to speak ; but it also had its type in the Old Testament. Isaiah was commanded to write the significant name of Maher-shalal-hash-baz upon a tablet (*Is. VIII. 1*). The supernatural incident of the narrative, of which the Old Testament may seem to offer no precise analogy, is the dumbness. But if it be borne in mind that the asking and receiving a sign from heaven, in confirmation of a promise or prophecy, was usual among the Hebrews (*Is. VII. 11.*) that the temporary loss of one of the senses was the peculiar punishment inflicted after a heavenly vision (*Acts IX. 8. 17*)—that Daniel became dumb whilst the angel was talking with him, and did not recover his speech till the angel had touched his lips, and opened his mouth (*Dan. X. 15*)—if we bear all these things in mind, the origin of the dumbness of Zacharias will also be found in the legend, and not in historical fact. Of two ordinary and subordinate features of the narrative, one—the righteousness of the parents of the Baptist (*v. 6*)—is merely a conclusion founded upon the belief that to a pious couple alone would the blessing of such a son be vouchsafed, and consequently is void of all historical worth ; the other—the statement that John was born in the reign of Herod the Great (*v. 5*)—is, without doubt, a correct calculation. Thus, we stand here upon purely mythical-poetical ground—the only historical reality which we can hold fast, as positive matter of fact being this—the impression made by John by virtue of his ministry, and his relation to Jesus was so powerful as to lead to the subsequent glorification of his birth in connection with the birth of the Messiah in the Christian legend.

An amusing specimen of the manner in which the New Testament myths had their origin, is given by Matthew (*XXI. 1–9*), in his account of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The Evangelist says that Jesus, when near the city, sent a couple of his disciples to get a she-ass and

foal which they should find at a designated place, and bring them to him. "And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass and the colt, and put on *them* their clothes, and they set him [Jesus] thereon" that is on the two asses; and so he rode into Jerusalem. The reader will ask how he rode on two asses at the same time; but will not get a satisfactory reply from any of the apologists of the Bible. They are all puzzled at such a statement. The meaning that Jesus rode "on them" is still plainer in the original Greek, than in the English; and the last shift of the theologians is to assert that Jesus had some of those inscrutable ways, which are attributed to Jehovah, whenever he is detected in doing any absurd or abominable action. But why did Matthew write such stuff? To this question we have a satisfactory answer. He says of the triumphal entry

"All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet" Zechariah, who wrote "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee! He is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass" *Zech. IX. 9.*

The Evangelist understood this to refer to Jesus, and supposing that it had been fulfilled, wrote it down so; and understanding that the king was to make his entry on two asses, wrote that down in the same manner.

"And lo! [when Christ was crucified] the veil of the temple was rent asunder from the top to the bottom: and the earth was shaken, and the rocks were rent, and the sepulchres laid open: and many bodies of saints who slept, were raised, and leaving their sepulchres after his resurrection, entered the holy city and appeared to many." *Mat. XXVII. 52, 53.*

"Who, it may be asked [says Norton] were these saints? Not disciples of Christ: for many of them had not died. Not unconverted Jews of that time, for to them such a title would not be applied. How long had they lain in their sepulchres? We cannot but suppose that corruption had done its work on the larger portion: and is it to be thought that God would recreate, as it were, those mouldering bodies without some purpose far different from what can be discerned?"

Matthew says, (II. 16) that, when Herod heard of the birth of Jesus, "the King of the Jews," he was troubled, and for fear ordered that "all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under," should be slain. But it is a well established historical fact that Herod died three years before the year 1 A. D. Christians say that there is an error in our reckoning; but our reckoning is vastly more reliable than their gospels. Hennell remarks that this wholesale murder "is not mentioned by the other three Evangelists, nor by Josephus, although the latter is very minute in detailing the barbarities of Herod. The conduct attributed to Herod is in itself absurd: he makes no search after the one dangerous child, to whom the visit of the wise men must have afforded a good clue, but slays the children of a whole town and the adjoining country in a mass. It is inconceivable that any fit of anger should lead a politic old king, however tyrannical, to indulge in such useless and costly cruelty. And how could Josephus, who has filled thirty-seven chapters with the history of Herod, omit all allusions to such a wholesale murder? Lardner supposes that Josephus wilfully suppressed this fact, which is rather hard upon Josephus, since Mark, Luke, John, and all other historians are as silent as he." This myth was taken not from Jewish history, but from an older myth of Hindostan. The birth of the Boodhist savior of mankind, Sakya-Muni, was the occasion of a royal murder of the innocents in the same manner and for the same motives, as are recorded of the Jewish affair, which happened five centuries later. Strauss in his *Critical Examination of the Life of Jesus* has discussed very thoroughly the New Testament myths which were of Jewish origin; but those, which originated in Hindostan, and were imported into Judea and engrafted upon Christianity by the Boodhistic Essenes have not yet been investigated.

CHAPTER XL

CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENTS.

"Gulliver has such fables but not such contradictions" **BOLINGBROKE**

§ 60. Two contradictory statements can not both be true: a divine revelation could contain no falsehood: the Bible is full of contradictions and falsehoods: and therefore is not a divine revelation. I presume it may be safely said that no book in existence contains so many contradictions as the Bible.

In all ages, since the death of Jesus, these discrepancies have been a source of annoyance and difficulty to the Christian apologists, and numerous attempts have been made to reconcile the contradictory passages, but the explanations are generally founded on improbable, and many of them on most absurd, assumptions. The more reasonable Christian critics confess judgment at once, and say that the text has been corrupted or interpolated: the less reasonable assert that the contradictions either do not exist, or that they are so unimportant as not to deserve notice. Paley says "I do not know a more rash or unphilosophical conduct of the understanding than to reject the substance of a story by reason of some diversity in the circumstances with which it is related. The usual character of *human* testimony is substantial truth under circumstantial variety." I do know a more rash and unphilosophical conduct—it is to suppose that a book marked, in a high degree, by *human* defects is not *human* testimony but *divine*: —to receive as a revelation from Heaven an old book, which is notorious for the multitude of its absurd and irreconcilable contradictions and falsehoods.

There are many contradictions between different passages of the *Pentateuch*, but these have a bearing upon the question whether that book was written by Moses, and accord

ingly will be reserved for the chapter on the *Genuineness of the Biblical Books*. Other contradictions in regard to miracles will be reserved for the chapter on that subject.

The most extensive class of discrepancies is composed of those which are found between the books of *Kings* (including *Samuel*) and the books of the *Chronicles*. The writer of the latter books sought to glorify the kingdom of Judah, and particularly King David, and to magnify the importance of the Levites: the author of *Kings* seems to have been more disposed to be truthful and impartial. Some of the contradictions are shown in the following parallel passages.

*Kings.**Chronicles.*

David numbered Israel at the instigation of Jehovah. 2. S. XXIV. 1.

It was at the instigation of Satan. 1. Ch. XXI. 1.

David had concubines. 2 S. V. 13.

The concubines are not mentioned in the parallel passages in *Chronicles*. 1. Ch. XIV. 3.

David massacred two-thirds of the Moabites. 2. S. VIII. 2.

This cruelty is not mentioned by the Chronicler. 1. Ch. XVIII. 3.

David burned men of Rabbah in brick-kilns. 2. S. XII. 31.

Not mentioned by the Chronicler 1. Ch. XX. 3.

David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah, and the reproof of his wickedness by the prophet Nathan are fully stated in *Kings*. 2. S. XI. 2—XII. 26.

All these interesting facts are discreetly omitted in *Chronicles*. 1. Ch. XX.

David gave up two brother-in-law and five step-sons to be murdered. 2. S. XXI. 1—11.

No mention.

Solomon had 700 wives, 300 concubines, and was idolatrous. 1. K. XI.

No mention.

The incest of Ammon, son of David, and the murder of the criminal by his brother. 2. S. XIII.

No mention.

Kings.

In the reign of Rehoboam (son of Solomon) "Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy, with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. For they also built them high places, and images, and groves on every high hill and under every green tree. And there were also Sodomites in the land; and they did, according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel." 1. *K. XIV.* 22-24.

Abijam "walked in all the sins of his father," Rehoboam. 1. *K. XV.* 3.

Asa, son of Abijam, did not remove "the high places." 1. *K. XV.* 14.

In the reign of Jehoshaphat son of Asa, "the high places were not taken away, for the people offered and burned incense yet in the high places" 1. *K. XXII.* 43.

In the reign of Jehoash, "the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places." 2. *K. XII.* 3.

Heathen worship in reign of Azariah. 2. *K. XV.* 4.

The people practised heathen worship in the reign of Jotham. 2. *K. XV.* 35.

Hezekiah "removed the high places, and broke the images, and cut down the groves, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it." 2. *K. XVIII.* 4.

Chronicles.

Rehoboam "forsook the law of the Lord and all Israel with him." 2 *Ch. XII.* 1.

Abijah was a pious man. 2 *Ch. XIII.* 2. 11

Asa did remove "the high places." 2. *Ch. XIV.* 3.

Jehoshaphat "took away the high places and groves out of Judah." 2. *Ch. XVII.* 6.

In the reign of Joash "all the people went to the house of Baal and broke it down, and broke his altars and his images in pieces." 2. *Ch. XXIII.* 17.

No mention. 2. *Ch. XXVI.*

The people "did corruptly" 2. *Ch. XXVII.* 3.

Hezekiah "opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them" 2. *Ch. XXXI.* 3.

Kings.

In the *Kings* (2. S. VI.) the priests and Levites do not appear on the occasion at all, and sacrifice is offered by David himself, whereas under the law a priest should have offered it.

Hiram presented 20 measures of oil to Solomon. 1. K. V. 11.

The Ammonites obtained 1000 mercenaries of King Maacah to fight against Israel. 2. S. X. 6.

In the battle 700 charioteers were slain. 2. S. X. 18.

For David's offence in numbering the people, Jehovah proposed to inflict one of three great evils on Judea, one of which was a seven years famine. 2. S. XXIV. 13.

Solomon "went to sacrifice there [at Gibeon] for that was the great high place." 1 K. III. 4.

In all these cases the Chronicler shows an evident desire to conceal the sins or magnify the honors of Judah. Many other cases might be cited, but the quotation of the passages would require more space than can be afforded in this book. I shall now give some contradictions which do not appear to owe their origin to any dishonest purpose in the writers—

There was war between kings Asa and Baasha all their days. 1. K. XV. 33.

Baasha died in the 26th year of Asa. 1. K. XIV. 6. 8.

Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he mounted the throne. 2. K. VIII. 26.

Chronicles.

In the *Chronicles* (1. Ch. XIII. XV. XVI.), the priests and Levites play a principal part in the removal of the Ark by David to Jerusalem.

He presented 20,000 measures. 2. Ch. II. 10.

They obtained 32,000 chariots of war. (1. Ch. XIX. 7.). There never were 32,000 chariots of war, at one time, in all western Asia.

In the battle 7000 charioteers were slain. 1. Ch. XIX. 8.

The Chronicler says it was a three years' famine. 1. Ch. XXI. 11. 12.

Solomon went to Gibeon, "for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God which Moses" had made. 2. Ch. 1. 3.

In Asa's reign, Judah had peace during seven years of Baasha's time. 2. Ch. XIV. 1. 6.

Baasha built Ramah in the 36th year of Asa's reign. 2. Ch. XVI. 1.

He was forty-two years old, when he mounted the throne. 2. Ch. XXII. 2.

Kings.

King Abijam reigned three years and died before Jeroboam. 1. K. XV. 1. 2. 9.

Solomon had 40,000 horses in his stalls! 1. K. IV. 26.

There were in the time of David 800,000 soldiers in Israel and 500,000 in Judah (2. S. XXIV. 9.) The Jews were not divided into the two nations of "Israel" and "Judah" until two generations after this census, but were composed of the twelve tribes.

Chronicles.

Abijah lived after Jeroboam's death, waxed mighty, married fourteen wives, and begat two sons and fourteen daughters. 2. Ch. XIII. 1. 2. 20. 21. XIV. 1.

Solomon had 4000 horses in his stalls. 2. Ch. IX. 25

There were 1,100,000 soldiers in Israel and 470,000 in Judah. 1. Ch. XIX. 5. 6.

Matthew and Luke, both give a genealogy of Jesus. The former begins at Abraham and comes down to Joseph; the latter begins at Joseph and carries the line up to Adam. Matthew says there were 26 generations between Jesus and David; Luke says there were 43. Matthew says "Jacob begot Joseph", and Luke says Joseph was "the son of Heli." Christians try to reconcile the difficulty by asserting that Luke gives the genealogy of Mary; but the assertion has not a particle of evidence to support it. A human biographer, if giving, in such a case, the genealogy of a woman, would have stated the fact clearly so as not to be misunderstood. Such a method of interpretation may get rid of a discrepancy, but it accuses Jehorah, the alleged author, of being little better than a fool. There are but two or three names which are found in both genealogies — so little resemblance is there between them. Matthew mentions Salathiel and says he was the son of Jechonias; Luke says he was the son of Neri. Certainly, Salathiel did not have two fathers. The supposition that Luke gave the genealogy of Mary will not account for the discrepancies beyond Salathiel; every discrepancy there implies an inevitable falsehood in the Scripture. Luke says that Rhesa was the son of Zerobabel, but the author of *Chronicles* (1. Ch. III. 17. 19) says that Zerubabel had no son of that name. Luke says that Sala was the son of Cainan and the grandson of Arphaxad; the author of

Genesis says Salah was the son of Arphaxad ; and he does not mention Cainan (*Gen.* X. 24. XI. 12). Matthew and Luke say that Zerubabel was the son of Salathiel, but in *Chronicles* it is written that he was the son of Pedaiah. Matthew says that "Joram begot Ozias" (*Mat.* I. 8), but in the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles* it is stated that Ozias was the great-great-grand-son of Joram, — three kings, in the direct line, reigning between the two. Dr. Doddridge supposes that Matthew intended to punish Abaziah for his wickedness by leaving his name out ! These genealogies of Jesus after all do not amount to much, for if the New Testament is to be believed, it does not appear that Jesus had in his veins a particle of the blood of any one mentioned in all these lists. His only human blood was of Mary, and the Evangelists do not give the least hint to enable us to discover that she had a drop of David's blood in her veins.

A large portion of the *Pentateuch* is occupied with giving directions, prescribed by Jehovah in regard to the manner of managing the sacrifices. These directions purport to have been given when the Jews were brought out of Egypt, and to have been written by the man who led them out. In later years, it was discovered, that the greater the ceremonies the less was the valuable religion, and the sacrifices became an eyesore to the better class of the Jews. The books of the later prophets contain many passages showing that they had little respect for the ancient ceremonies. The clearest of these passages is in *Jeremiah* (*VII.* 22), where he says Jehovah told him "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burned offerings or sacrifices". Did Moses lie ? did Jeremiah lie ? or did they both lie ? or both tell the truth ?

The author of *Exodus* (*VI.* 3) says that Jehovah was not known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by the name of Jehovah. Yet in *Genesis* (*XXVIII.* 13) it is said that the Lord appeared to Jacob in a dream and told his own name (Jehovah in the Hebrew Bible). And elsewhere, (*Gen.* *XXII.* 14), it is said that Abraham called the place of the proposed sacrifice of Isaac, "Jehovah-jireh ;" and in *Genesis IV.* 26, it is said, "then men began to call on the name of Jehovah."

Moses says (*Gen. XXXII. 19*) that Jacob bought the field of Sychem, while Luke says (*Acts VII. 15, 16*) that Abraham bought it.

There is a discrepancy between *Genesis* (*XLVI. 26, 27*), and *Acts* (*VII. 14*), in regard to the number of Israelites who went to Egypt with Jacob: Moses says there were sixty-six, and Luke says there were seventy-five.

Did Aaron die on the top of Mount Hor, on the way from Kadesh to the Red Sea (*Num. XX. 28*), and also at Mosera on the way from Beeroth to Gudgodah, (*Deut. X. 6*)?

In *Nehemiah* (*VII.*) there is an enumeration of the men of the people of Israel in detail and in total; but the total as given by the prophet 42,360, does not agree with the total, obtained by adding together the particulars, which amount to 29,818. Watson in his Reply to Paine admits the discrepancy, but asserts most positively, without being able to show a particle of evidence to support his assertion, that the discrepancy is owing to some error in the transcribing.

David is described as "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war" (*1 S. XVI. 18*), and afterwards he is described as "a youth", "stripling", who had never had any fights save with wild animals, who had never worn armor, and who took his sling and pebbles to fight against the Philistines, because, after trial, he found the sword and armor of Saul too cumbersome. *1 S. XVII. 33-42*.

David brought the head of Goliath to Jerusalem (*1 S. XVII. 54*), which was then, and for a long time afterwards a city of the enemies, against whom David was fighting. *1 Ch. XI. 4*.

Abraham did not leave Haran till after the death of his father Terah (*Acts VII. 4*). Terah died one hundred and thirty-five years after the birth of Abraham (*Gen. XI. 32*). Abraham left Haran when he was seventy-five years old. *Gen. XII. 4*.

Jeremiah (*XXI. 9*) advised the Israelites to desert to the Chaldeans: and he denied (*XXXVII. 14*) that he gave such advice; and then we are told that he was cast into two different prisons for giving it. *Jer. XXXVII. 16, XXXVIII. 6*.

The author of the book of *Joshua* (*X. 13*) quotes the book of *Jasher* as authority for the arrest of the sun by

Joshua, and the author of *Kings* (1 *K. I.* 18) quotes the same book to prove the sayings of Saul four hundred years later.

"God did tempt Abraham" (*Gen. XXII.* 1). "God tempteth not any man". *James, I.* 13.

Saul was much pleased with David before the battle with Goliath (1 *S. XVI.* 21, 22). After the death of Goliath, David was an entire stranger to Saul (1 *S. XVII.* 55). Bayle remarks "It is somewhat strange that Saul did not know David that day, since that young man had played several times on his musical instrument before him, to disperse those black vapors which molested him. If such a narrative as this should be found in *Thucydides*, or in *Livy*, all the critics would unanimously conclude that the transcribers had transposed the pages, forgot something in one place, repeated something in another, or inserted some preposterous additions in the author's work. But no such suspicions ought to be entertained of the Bible".

Did Peter deny Christ to a man (*John XVIII.* 26. *Luke XXII.* 58), or to a maid? *Mat. XXVI.* 71. *Mark XIV.* 69.

Matthew says (*XXVII.* 34), that, at the crucifixion, they gave Jesus "vinegar mixed with gall" to drink, but Mark (*XV.* 23) says "wine mixed with myrrh".

Judas repented according to Matthew (*XXVII.* 3), and it is implied in *Acts* (*I.* 18), that he did not repent. Matthew says he gave back the thirty pieces of silver to the priests; *Acts* says he did not. Matthew says the priests with that money bought a field to bury strangers; *Acts* says he bought a field for himself. Matthew says he hanged himself; according to *Acts*—"He burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out". Matthew accounts for the designation of the stranger's graveyard, as the field of blood, by saying that it was bought with the reward of iniquity; but *Acts* says it was because of Judas' tragic death there.

The expulsion of the money changers from the temple took place soon after the baptism of Jesus, according to John (*II.* 13), but Matthew (*XXI.* 12), Mark (*XI.* 15), and Luke (*XIX.* 45), place the event in the last visit to Jerusalem, and just before the crucifixion.

John (*I.* 28, 40, 41) says that Jesus called Simon and Andrew, at Bethabara, beyond Jordan, in the presence of John the Baptist, while Matthew says (*IV.* 12, 18) the call occurred at the sea of Galilee after the temptation on the mount, and after John was cast into prison.

According to Matthew (*III.* 16. *IV.* 1, 2), Mark (*I.* 11, 12), and Luke (*III.* 22. *IV.* 1. 2), Jesus, after being baptized by John, was forthwith led out into the wilderness, and tempted by the devil during forty days : but John (*I.* 33, 35, 43. *II.* 1, 12, 13) completely excludes the temptation. He says that on the first day after the baptism, Jesus was with John, on the second day he conversed with Peter, on the third day he attended the marriage in Cana, then he went to Capernaum, and then to Jerusalem, so that it was impossible for him to have spent any forty days in the wilderness.

John the Evangelist (*I.* 29-34) says that John the Baptist "bare record" of Christ at the baptism :—"This is the son of God". Again, a few days later, and long before the imprisonment of the Baptist, the latter, in a long discourse, is represented saying : "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (*John III.* 27) : and yet Matthew (*XI.* 2), and Luke (*VII.* 18), state that when the Baptist was in prison, he sent two of his disciples to Jesus to learn whether he was really the Christ, or whether he was only the forerunner of a greater ? Mark (*I.* 11) says that at the baptism, there was a voice from Heaven :—"Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased". How then could John the Baptist doubt, himself being inspired, and having such evidence before him ? St. John must have manufactured those speeches ; for Apollos, an "eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures", who was a disciple of the Baptist, knew not Christ, and long after his death was baptising with the baptism of John, when he was converted by Paul. *Acts XVIII.* 25 ; *XIX.* 3.

Matthew (*V.* 12) and Mark (*I.* 14) assert that Jesus did not go into Galilee until after the Baptist's imprisonment, but John states (*III.* 33) not only that Jesus went into Galilee immediately after the baptism and before the Baptist was imprisoned, but even baptised the latter in Judea.

While Paul was in Damascus, "the Jews took counsel to kill him. But their laying in wait was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket". *Acts. IX. 23-25.*

But according to Paul's own story, it was the governor that wanted to kill him. "In Damascus, the governor under Aretas, the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me. And through a window, in a basket, was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands".

There a number of discrepancies in the different accounts of the miracle at Saul's conversion.

The first account (*Acts IX. 1-9*) says that Saul was going to Damascus to persecute the Christians there, when suddenly "a light from Heaven" shone round about him, and he fell to the earth. A voice addressed him, ordering him to go into the city, and it should be told him what he should do. Some men with him "stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man".

The second account (*Acts XXII. 3-11*) says the light was "a great light": and those who were with Saul "saw indeed the light and were afraid; but they heard not the voice."

In the third narrative (*Acts XXVI. 9-20*) Saul says, himself speaking, that he went with authority from the chief priests to persecute the Christians, when "I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun * * * and when we were *all* fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.' And I said 'Who art thou, Lord?' And he said 'I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. But rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee: delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send thee.'"

The first and second accounts contemplate that Saul should be told in Damascus, what he should do for the

Lord : and the message was delivered by Ananias accordingly, as related in another part of the *Acts* : the third account represents the Lord as delivering his message directly on the spot.

Saul was blind from the effects of the light, "above the brightness of the sun" (the affair took place in "mid-day") : and the Lord went to Ananias, a Christian in Damascus, told him where Saul was, and ordered him to go and restore him to sight by laying on of hands. Now, Ananias had a pretty high opinion of Jehovah, but he imagined the Lord did not know so much about Saul as he ought to before ordering one of his servants to put himself, a Christian, within the clutches of that bloody persecutor : and he answered "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem : and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name" (*Acts IX. 13, 14*). "So you see", hints Ananias, "if I go near Saul, he may nab me, and broil me over a slow fire, which would not be agreeable, as I am a man of weak nerves ; besides my business requires my personal attention." The Lord orders him to do as he was bid, for Saul was all right.

Now, it so happens that the lying priest who wrote this story, exposes his fraud beautifully. How could Ananias tell the Lord that Saul had authority to bind the Christians? How could Ananias know anything of the sort? The priests at Jerusalem, of course, did not tell that Saul had authority to seize the Christians, for such telling would defeat the purpose, neither did Saul tell of his authority, or he would have told at the same time of his conversion, and the report of the latter would have reached Ananias as surely as that of the authority. The fact is that the author of the *Acts* wanted to make a dramatic story, and in making the attempt was green enough to botch the job.

When Ananias went to Saul he said to him, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (*Acts IX. 17*). Now, according to the three accounts heretofore given, neither Jesus nor any other person "appeared" unto Saul.

Paul tells the story differently. He says that Ananias came to him and said, " ' Brother Saul, receive thy sight.' And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, ' The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' "

On the morning of the resurrection, says Matthew, (XXVIII. 1), Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the sepulchre. According to Mark (XVI. 2) Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, and Salome went. Luke tells us (XXIII. 55. XXIV. 1—10), that Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, Joanna, " and other women, " went together to the tomb; and John (XX. 1) says that Mary Magdalene went alone.

Matthew states that an angel descended from Heaven and rolled away the stone as the women came. Mark says the stone was rolled away when the women arrived there, and when they entered, they saw a young man clothed in a long white garment, sitting on the right side. According to Luke, they found the stone rolled away, and inside after a little time they saw that " two men stood by them in shining garments. " John says, Mary Magdalene found the stone rolled away, and saw two angels " sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. "

Matthew says that, after the two women left the tomb, Jesus met them and requested them to tell Peter and the disciples to meet him in Galilee. Mark states that the young man in white requested the three women to direct the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee. Luke asserts that the six or more women, finding the sepulchre empty, were told by the " two men in the shining garments, " that Jesus had arisen, saying nothing about going to Galilee; and thereupon the women told the apostles, who disbelieved, and Peter ran to the sepulchre to satisfy himself. John says, the one woman told Peter and John that the sepulchre was empty, whereupon those two " ran both together " to the tomb.

According to Matthew, Jesus met the two women going from the sepulchre, requested them to send the eleven to meet him in Galilee, whither they went, and where he met them, and where "they worshipped him : but some doubted." Mark affirms that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, who went and told his disciples, and they "believed not." Afterwards he appeared to two of the apostles and these two told the others, who did not believe. Afterwards he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat and upbraided them with their unbelief, and "so then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was taken up into Heaven." Luke states that on the day of the resurrection, Christ appeared to two of the apostles on the road to Emmaus, and had a long conversation with them. That same day he appeared to the eleven at meat in Jerusalem, ate "broiled fish, and of an honey comb," spoke with them for some time ; led them out as far as Bethany, and was carried up to Heaven before them. John says, that Jesus appeared in the sepulchre to Mary Magdalene, and the same day in the evening, he appeared to ten apostles, Thomas being absent. Eight days later, Christ met the whole eleven in the same place, and Thomas who then saw him for the first time after the resurrection, being somewhat skeptical, stuck his finger into the hole to know whether it was there yet. Afterwards, Jesus showed himself to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. The *Acts* says Jesus was seen of the apostles for forty days after the resurrection.

There is a remarkable discrepancy between the report, given by the four Evangelists of the last words of Jesus to his apostles :

Matthew's report : — "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." *Mat. XXVIII.* 18, 19, 20.

Mark's report : — "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe ; in my name shall they cast out devils ; they shall speak with new tongues ; they shall take up

serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." *Mark. XVI. 15-18.*

Luke's report : — " Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day : and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father, upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." *Luke XXIV. 46-49.*

John's report : — " ' Peace be unto you ! as my Father has sent me, even so send I you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, ' Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.' " *John XX. 21-23.*

We have certainly found in this chapter an abundant supply of the " circumstantial variety ", which usually marks "*human* testimony " ; but whether there is any of the " substantial truth ", which should mark divine testimony, may be doubted. Is Jehovah the author of all these contradictions ? Yes, or no ? If not, what is he the author of ? Do the Christians intend to assert that Jehovah is the author of all that is true, and the devil of all that is false, in their Scriptures ? Certainly, they will not assert that any thing occurs merely of itself. Who then is the author of these discrepancies ?

CHAPTER XII.

INCONSISTENT DOCTRINES.

“By thy words thou shalt be condemned.”—JESUS.

§ 61. The Bible contains a record of four alleged covenants between Jehovah and mankind. The *first* covenant was that if Abraham, and his descendants should observe the ordinance of circumcision, and nothing more than that, (*Gen. XVII. 10*) they should inherit the land of Canaan forever, have a great multitude of children, and have Jehovah for their exclusive God. The *second* covenant was that the Jews should observe the Mosaic law, and in consideration thereof, Jehovah would be their exclusive God, and give them all kinds of temporal prosperity. The *third* covenant was that the Jews, who should act in accordance with the requirements of moral law, as taught by Jesus, and should observe the ceremonial commands of the Mosaic law, should enjoy everlasting and infinite joy in Heaven. The *fourth* covenant made with Paul, is, that all men, who shall be led by the Holy Ghost to believe that Jesus is the Redeemer of mankind, shall be saved in a future life. With four schemes of salvation so various, it might be expected, that there would be some inconsistencies in the Scriptures.

§ 62. *The New Testament asserts and the Old denies the immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments.* The immortality of the soul is one of the chief points of Christ's teaching. All the New Testament books make it a prominent doctrine. In the XVth chapter of the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Paul holds a lengthy discourse on eternal life. The sanctions of morality—the rewards for the deserving and the punishments for the wicked—are all confined, according to the New Testament, to the next world. Everlasting and intense delight in heaven, or pain in hell, is to be the portion of every man according to his deeds on earth: and surely that sanction should be enough.

The Evangelists in no place promise pleasure in this world to the followers of Christ, or threaten earthly punishment to sinners. On the contrary, the Christians are warned that they must turn their backs on the pleasures of this world, if they wish to secure a title to the joys of the next. The Lord shows no especial favors here to the faithful : " He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust " (*Mat. V. 45*) : " He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil " (*Luke VI. 28*) : and Jesus represents Dives as being in hell, and Lazarus as being in heaven for no other reasons than that the former was rich, and the latter poor upon earth. *Luke XVI. 19.*

The Old Testament teaches that the soul dies with the body. A few texts may be found to show that the doctrines of the life of the soul after the death of the body was not unknown, but the weight of authority is all against a resurrection. The silence of Moses in the law in regard to immortality, is equivalent to an express denial of it. He does not use the word. He represents Jehovah as taking particular care, after Adam had eaten the apple of knowledge, that he should not also eat of the apple of life, and " live forever " (*Gen. III. 22*). " Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return ", was the divine exclamation. There is no hint of a future life—an entire exclusion of it. There is no suspicion in the *Pentateuch* of a deathless soul. Solomon, the wisest of all men, gifted even with superhuman wisdom (*1 K. III. 11*), asserts (*Ec. I. 4*), that man passes away, " but the earth abideth forever ". And again he says : " That which befalleth the son of man, befalleth the beast : even one thing befalleth them : as the one dieth, so dieth the other : yea, they have all one breath ; so that man hath no preeminence above a beast : for all is vanity. All go unto one place : all are of dust and all turn to dust again " (*Ec. III. 19, 20*). And elsewhere he uses the emphatic language, " the living know that they shall die ; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward ; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love and their hatred and their envy is now perished : neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun. Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink

thy wine with a merry heart ; for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white ; and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with thy wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity ; for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labor which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest". The opinion of Job is equally clear : he says that, "as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away : so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more" (*Job VII. 9.*) David declares that "the dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (*Ps. CXV. 17.*) For fear that the Jews might adopt the old Egyptian superstition of a future life, Isaiah adds his negative : "The grave can not praise thee ; death cannot celebrate thee : they that go down into the pit, cannot hope for thy truth. The *living*, the *living*, he shall praise thee". *Is. XXXVIII. 18.* 19. See also *Job XIV. 7. 12. XIX. 26. XXI. 32,* and *Psalms CII. 11. 12.*

The Old Testament prescribes a minute code of things to be done, and things to be avoided ; the disobedient are threatened with severe punishments, and the faithful encouraged with the promise of great rewards. But all these rewards and punishments are to be administered on this earth. Adam's sin was to be punished in this world only. The punishment of Cain was to be that the earth should not yield her strength to his tillage (*Gen. IV. 13.*) The wickedness of the Antediluvians was so great that "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at heart ;" yet there is no mention of any punishment except the flood (*Gen. VI. 13.*) Ham's unlucky eyes were damned by Noah, with Jehovah's consent, in the condemnation of himself and all his descendants to slavery on this earth (*Gen. IX. 25.*) The people of Sodom were struck with blindness and destroyed with "brimstone and fire" (*Gen. XIX. 11, 24, 25.*) Abraham's willingness to obey the Lord was to be rewarded on earth by the increase of his posterity to be a great nation, with Jehovah for their God and protector. No mention is made of reward in Heaven (*Gen. XXII. 17.*) Deeds, esteemed very meri-

torious or wicked, are seldom recorded in the Pentateuch without the accompanying statement of the swift administration of reward or punishment, according to the merit or demerit. The exaltation of Phineas and the destruction of Korah were notable cases. And the idea is held out that such reward and punishment on earth are to be looked for invariably. So, when Moses was giving the commandments, he said to them, "Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live and that it may be well with you, and that he may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess" (*Deut. V. 33*). And Solomon holds the same opinion, for he says that "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life" (*Prov. XXII. 4*). Jehovah sanctions the decalogue not with threats of punishments in a future life, but with offers of reward in this. He says "Honor thy father and thy mother *that* thy days may be long in the land" (*Ex. XX. 12*). The idea of final settlement with man for all his sins and virtues, before he leaves this world, is particularly strong with Moses, and is set forth with great force in the beginning of Deuteronomy. Chapter seventh contains the words of Jehovah, conveying assurance to the Jews that obedience to the law of Moses would be rewarded by the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham (*Gen. XVII. 6, 7*), and disobedience should be punished with destruction. In chapter twenty-eighth of Deuteronomy, there is a long enumeration of the blessings which Jehovah will bestow upon the Israelites, if they shall be true to him, and of the evils which he will inflict, if they turn away and neglect his laws and ordinances. The blessings promised are all kinds of earthly prosperity, and the long list concludes thus: "the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord swore unto thy fathers to give thee." The evils threatened for disobedience are the sword, famine, pestilence, "madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart," consumption, fever, inflammation, extreme burning, blasting, mildew, all the diseases of Egypt, trembling of heart, failing of eyes, sorrow of mind, renewed captivity in Egypt; and, finally, "the Lord shall send upon thee

cursing, vexation and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed." Not a word of Heaven or Hell ! It is very clear that Moses was determined not to patronise those institutions. See, likewise, *Lev. XXVI.* 3, 4, 15-17 ; *Ex. XX.* 12 ; *Ps. LVIII.* 11.

No Christian author, worthy of note, contends that a future life was taught by the Old Testament. Warburton, in his work on the *Divine Legation of Moses*, unable to evade the plain denial of the soul's immortality in the *Pentateuch*, says "The absence or omission of a future state of rewards and punishments in the Mosaic religion, is a certain mark of its divinity." If that be so, what does the presence of that dogma in the New Testament prove ? Can its absence prove the divinity of one book, and its presence that of another ?

§ 63. *Moses and Jesus differ in regard to the interpretation of the myth of Adam's fall.* The author of the *Pentateuch*, in giving an account of the early history of mankind, thought proper to introduce the myth prevalent among all the ancient nations of western Asia of a golden age, when the earth and nature were inconceivably beautiful, when the whole animal creation was at peace, when men were free from pain and death, satisfied in every want, gratified in every desire without exertion, perfectly happy and sinless, and even ignorant of the distinction between right and wrong. The present condition of mankind is accounted for by supposing that the first man violated a command of Jehovah, and for that offense was rendered sinful and mortal, liable to disease and pain, and compelled to live in misery, and to earn his support by his labor. These were the punishments, and according to Moses, the only punishments inflicted for the disobedience of Adam.

Our human ideas of justice require that penalties shall be inflicted only for deeds which are known to be prohibited, and that the penalty inflicted shall have been declared beforehand, so that he, who may offend, shall have a proper idea of the magnitude of the suffering to which violation of the law will expose him. And as the fear of punishment is one of the strongest inducements which men feel to prevent their breaking the laws, and as that fear exercises the greater influence in proportion as the punishment is under-

stood to be certain and severe, so the judicious lawgiver will be careful that the penalty shall not be underrated. He will not only declare the punishment, but he will publish it in language which will not be misunderstood. In prohibiting the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to Adam, Jehovah took the precaution to describe the punishment which would be inflicted for a violation of the divine command—"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (*Gen. II. 17*), meaning that he should be rendered mortal—"for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return" (*Gen. III. 19*). This language clearly implies that Jehovah intended, Adam expected, and Moses understood that no other punishment would be inflicted than *that* threatened, and *that* specified as having been inflicted in accordance with the threat. The language of the Lord, when pronouncing sentence on the male offender, is given word for word by the conscientious reporter, thus : —

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake : in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee : and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground : for out of it wast thou taken : for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." (*Gen. III. 17—19*).

There is not the remotest indication that any punishment in a future life was thought of by any of the parties concerned : and in fact the writer of *Genesis* evidently had no belief in any life after the death of the body. Throughout the whole Bible, the fall of Adam is scarcely referred to—never referred to as a matter for which there would or could be any expiation—never referred to as subjecting man to any other punishment than that inflicted in this life. The story of the apple is not mentioned between the fourth chapter of *Genesis* and the last of *Malachi*.

In the time of Jesus, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was adopted by the majority of the people in Judea, and was firmly rooted among that class in which he hoped to make the most of his converts. Another doctrine had also some prevalence—that man was born wicked, that he was naturally sinful. Christ and his followers connected these two doctrines with the myth of the fall, to which a

new interpretation was given. The chief punishment of Adam was not inflicted on earth as represented by Moses, but was the condemnation of all men to hell, from which they could be rescued only by believing on Jesus Christ.

§ 64. *The Biblical writers had different ideas in regard to the number of the gods.* In the Old Testament the deity is usually spoken of as one—single in his nature ; but there are many passages which show that different doctrines were entertained. The Hebrew word *Elohim* which occurs in the first verse of *Genesis*, and is the only name used for God in that chapter, and is frequently used afterwards, is plural in its form and means “Gods,” but it is generally united to a singular verb ; as though a later age had endeavored to correct the ancient polytheism, but did not dare to abandon the old name of the divinities. When Jehovah destroyed Babel, he said to himself “let *us* go down.” He forgot that there was only one of him. The quotations made in chapter VII. of this book, from the history of these peculiar favorites of the Almighty show that idolatry was very extensively practised among them during the greater portion of the time from the exodus to the Babylonian Captivity, and that with this idolatry, polytheism, human sacrifices, and the grossest obscenities of phallic worship were connected. Besides, it is plain, from numerous passages, that the Jews before the exodus were not free from polytheistic ideas. Jacob said “If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God.” (*Gen. XXVIII. 20.*) Jehovah saw that Jacob was in earnest, and for fear of losing a worshipper, swallowed his indignation at such insolence, and brought the patriarch home safe. If Jehovah had not done his duty to his worshipper, the latter would probably have adored Baal or Moloch. Moses ordered the Jews to abstain from going “after other gods, of the gods of the people which were round about” them (*Deut. VI. 14.*) : and he declares that Jehovah was the greatest of “all gods.” (*Ex. XVIII. 11. XV. 11.*) And even in the late time of Jeremiah the same idea prevailed. The word of Jehovah came to that prophet, to the effect that “the gods which have not made the earth—even they

shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens" (*Jer. X. 11*). The Lord did not deny the existence of other gods, but warned the Jews that they would make a bad bargain by worshipping other divinities, whom he intended to annihilate. In a still later time, however, the Jews came to have a faith much nearer to pure monotheism. Lessing speaks thus of the polytheistic idea in Judea :—" So far as we can learn from the Old Testament, the Israelites before the time of the Babylonish captivity, had no correct idea of the unity of God. Otherwise they would not have given the same name to the false deities of other lands, and they would not have styled Jehovah *their* God—the God of *their* country, and the God of *their* fathers. It is plain that where he is called the only god, the meaning is that he was the first, the greatest, the most perfect. He recognized the divinities of the heathens as gods, and he claimed to be superior to them in wisdom and in power. So long as the Jews found no reason to doubt the superiority of their God, so long they were true to him ; but when they saw that another people, by the providence of its God, surpassed themselves in wealth or power, just so soon did they go a-whoring after the strange gods, supposed to be more powerful. [The prophets spoke of their desertion of Jehovah not as *atheism*, but as *infidelity* or *idolatry*. No Christian writer of the present day would say that the Mohammedan worships a God different from Jehovah.] But when the Jews were carried to Babylon, and had their minds opened as by a revelation, and saw a nation with a purer idea of monotheism and became more familiar with the writings of Moses, they became another people, and were no longer capable of running after strange gods. All idol-worship was at an end. If this undeniable change in the religious history of the Jews is not to be thus explained, then it is inexplicable. They might desert a national divinity, but they could not desert the only God."

But amidst all the polytheistic ideas of the Old Testament there is no mention of a "trinity," and indeed that word is nowhere to be found in the Bible, nor is there any hint that God is three-fold in his nature. It has been said that the "three men" who appeared to Abraham, on their way to Sodom, were the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and

the last two were they whose sight excited such wicked desires in the hearts of the depraved natives of that place. This, however, is an unfounded assumption, and was only resorted to as a desperate shift for testimony that the gods of the Old and New Testament are the same. There is nothing to connect the plural of Elobim with the Trinity of the Christians. Moses says "The Lord, our God, is one Lord" (*Deut. VI. 4*); there is no hint at three in one. Jehovah declares "I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me" (*Deut. XXXII. 39*).

The New Testament is interpreted by ninety-nine out of a hundred Christians to teach that God is one, but is composed of three persons. In several passages Jesus is reported as representing himself of the same nature with Jehovah, as "I and my Father are one" (*John X. 31*); "I am in the Father and the Father in me" and "Before Abraham was, I am." *John VIII. 58*, &c.

The three persons of the Godhead are distinct individuals and can act separately from each other. The Virgin Mary was impregnated by the Holy Ghost (*Mat. I. 18*; *Luke I. 35*), and the child conceived was the Son. In the acts of impregnation and conception, the second and third persons of the Godhead acted separately from the Father, and from each other. What the Father was doing in the meantime is not stated. The Son was so far independent of the Father that he was not so much in favor with the latter at one time as at another (*Luke II. 40, 52*). The desires of the first and third members of the Divine firm did not always agree. The junior partner said, on one occasion, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not *my* will but *thine* be done" (*Luke XXII. 42*). Indeed, he frequently used expressions to show that their purposes did not always coincide (*John V. 30*; *VI. 39*; *Mat. VII. 21*; *XII. 50*). The Father seems to have been even too indifferent to the feelings of the Son, and the latter, in the bitter agonies of the cross, cried out, reproachfully, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (*Mark XV. 34*).

It is plain that, if these three persons be one, they are not three in the same sense in which they are one. Jesus frequently exhibited symptoms of human weakness; and

was it possible for him to be at the same time God and man, finite and infinite? Paul says, "There is one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ" (1 *Tim.* II. 5). Could Jesus mediate between himself and another party? When Jesus was called "good", he objected to the title, asking, "Why callest thou me good"? implying that there was none good save another—Jehovah (*Luke XVIII.* 19). The author of *Hebrews* (V. 8. 9) said that Jesus learned "obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation". How could divine nature be originally imperfect? Or was his human nature capable of perfection? So, too, Paul says Christ "pleased not himself" (*Rom.* XV. 3). If divine, he ought to have been a pretty good judge.

§ 65. *The Bible teaches inconsistent doctrines in regard to what is necessary for obtaining divine favor.* The Old Testament required descent from Jacob, and observance of the Mosaic law. Jesus said, "All that ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets" (*Mat.* VII. 12). "He [Christ] shall [on Judgment-day] reward every man according to his works" (*Mat.* XVI. 27). James taught the same doctrine, "By works a man is justified" (*James II.* 24). Paul and Mark teach differently: "He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be damned" (*Mark XVI.* 16). "The just shall live by faith" (*Rom.* I. 17). "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin" (*Rom.* XIV. 23). There is still another doctrine: "By grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast" (*Eph.* II. 8. 9). The Old Testament represented Jehovah as having no favor for any nation save the Jews. However much he was offended at their rebellions, he never, for one instant, became the God of any other tribe. "The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments: and to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor" (*Deut.* XXVI. 17. 18). The New Testament teaches a different doctrine: love is the fulfilment of the law, salvation depends on faith (*Mark*

XVI. 16) ; "Jews and Gentiles" "are all under sin" *Rom. III. 9.*

§ 66. *The general spirit and purpose of the New Testament differs greatly from that of the Mosaic law.* The Old Testament is full of a sanguinary spirit, and, if received as of divine authority, never would educate a nation to feelings of charity, love, moderation, humility, or justice toward foreigners, while the New Testament would have such an influence. By the *Pentateuch* death was the punishment for blasphemy (*Lev. XXIV. 23*), for Sabbath-breaking (*Num. XV. 32*), for idolatry (*Deut. XIII. 6 ; XVII. 5 ; Ex. XXII. 20*), for filial stubbornness (*Deut. XXI. 18*), and for adultery (*Deut. XXII. 22*). Nations in the neighborhood of Judea, if idolatrous, were to be destroyed utterly, "smiting them with the edge of the sword", "making no covenant with them, and showing no mercy to them", unless it were to carry off the virgins for concubines, after slaying all the males and married women.

The following quotations from different books will serve to show something of the spirit of the Old Testament :

"Thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same". *Ps. LXVIII. 22.*

"Thou shalt not seek their [the Amorites' and the Moabites'] peace nor their prosperity, all thy days, forever". *Deut. XXIII. 6.*

"Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty". *Jud. I. 23.*

"Wretched daughter of Babylon! Blessed be he who shall requite thee as thou hast treated us. Blessed be he who shall take thy little ones, and dash them against the stones". *Ps. CXXXVII. 8, 9.*

"The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked". *Ps. LVIII. 10.*

"Do unto them as unto the Midianites, as to Sisera, as to Jaron, at the brook of Kison, which perished at Endor; they became as dung for the earth". *Ps. LXXXIII. 9.*

"O my God, make them like a wheel, as the stubble before the wind, as the fire burneth the wood, as the flame setteth the mountain on fire. So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm". *Ps. LXXXIII. 13.*

"Let them be confounded and troubled forever; yea, let them be put to shame and perish". *Ps. LXXXIII. 17.*

"I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh". *Deut. XXXII. 42.*

"An eye for an eye", and "a tooth for a tooth", (*Ex. XXI. 24* ; *Lev. XXIV. 20*) was the rule of conduct toward Jews—but toward Gentiles there was "no mercy".

David, in *Psalms CIX.*, thus hurls his curses at some enemy :

"Let his days be few ; and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg ; let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath ; and let the stranger spoil his labor. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him ; neither let there be any to favor his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off ; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out".

"It may be well", says Kitto (*Cyc. Bib. Lit.*) "here to notice what are called the vindictive Psalms, namely those which contain expressions of wrath and imprecations against the enemies of God and his people [and David himself] such as *Psalms LIX.*, *LXIX.* *LXXIX.*, and which in consequence are apt to shock the feelings of some Christian readers. In order to obviate this offense, most of our pious commentators insist that the expressions are not maledictions or imprecations, but simple declarations of what will or may take place. But this is utterly inadmissible, for in several of the most startling passages, the language in the original is plainly imperative, and not indicative (*Ps. LIX. 14* ; *LXIX. 25. 28* ; *LXXIX. 6*). The truth is that only a morbid benevolence, a mistaken philanthropy, takes offense at these psalms ; for, in reality they are not opposed to the spirit of the Gospel [at least not the Mosaic portion of it], or to that love of enemies which Christ enjoined. Resentment against evil-doers is so far from being sinful that we find it exemplified in the meek and spotless Redeemer himself (*Mark. III. 5*). If the emotion and its utterance were essentially sinful, how could Paul (*1 Cor. XVI. 22*) wish the enemy of Christ to be accursed (*anathema*), or say of his own enemy Alexander, the copper-smith, 'The Lord reward him according to his works', (*2 Tim. IV. 14*) ; and especially, how could the spirits of the just in heaven call on God for vengeance ?" *Rev. VI. 10*.

"The Lord is a man of war." *Ex. XV. 3*.

The spirit of the New Testament is very different from all this.

“God is love.” 1 *John IV.* 8. 2 *Cor. XIII.* 11.

“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. *Mat. V.* 44.

Christ repealed the eye-for-an-eye and tooth-for-a-tooth doctrine, and prohibited revenge (*Mat. V.* 44 ; *Luke VI.* 28 ; *Acts VII.* 60 ; *Rom. XII.* 14). He said nothing of punishing blasphemers, Sabbath-breakers, idolaters, or stubborn sons, in this world, and he directed that the punishment of an adulteress should be inflicted only by sinless persons, which was equivalent to saying that the Jewish law against adultery should not be executed at all. *John VIII.* 11.

§ 67. *The Old and New Testaments disagree in regard to the perpetuity of the Jewish law.* There are few points in which the Old Testament is clearer than that the law of Moses was intended to remain in force forever. When Jehovah chose Abraham to be the father of God's people, he used the following very perspicuous words : “I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant ; to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession ; and I will be their God” (*Gen. XVII.* 7. 8). Whether Abraham had a bad memory, or whether the covenant was not of sufficient importance for him to keep it before his mind, Moses does not say, though he informs us that Jehovah repeated his promise no less than five different times to Abraham (*Gen. XII.* 1–8 ; *XIII.* 14–17 ; *XV.* 1–5, 13–21 ; *XVII.* 1–8 ; *XXII.* 15–18). To Isaac the promise was renewed but once (*Gen. XXIV.* 2–5), and to Jacob thrice (*Gen. XXVIII.* 13–15 ; *XXXI.* 10–12 ; *XLVI.* 2–3). Jehovah did not expressly state on all these occasions that the covenant should last forever, but that was plainly implied. During the time of Moses the Lord frequently alluded to the promise, which he “swore unto Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob ;” but when he found out what a stiff-necked race the Jews were, he gave them to

understand that the contract was mutually binding, and if they would not observe their share, he not only would not observe his part, but he would give them a hell on earth besides (*Deut. VIII. 20*). It was nevertheless very plain that he never intended to entirely fulfil his threat, but purposed to preserve his law to Israel forever. "The statutes and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandments which he [Moses] wrote for you, ye shall observe to do forevermore" (*2. K. XVII. 37*). "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words [the whole law] in your heart and in your soul and bind them for a sign upon your head that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" etc. (*Deut. XI. 18. 19*). The threats against the Jews in no place hint a withdrawal or destruction of the Mosaic law, or its repeal to make room for an improved code. Moses said (*Deut. XXVII. 26*), "cursed be the man that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." So too the writer of the *C VIIth Psalm* (8th verse) speaks of the covenant and "the word which he [Jehovah] commanded to a thousand generations". And eight hundred and fifty years after the alleged time of Moses, after the Jews had committed nearly all their great offences against the law, the Lord said to Jeremiah (*XI. 3*), "cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant." Besides the numerous promises that the covenant with Abraham should endure forever, the only consideration for which—circumcision—was always faithfully observed by the Jews, there were numerous promises that minor points of the law should be sacred forever. Thus, Levi should minister forever to Jehovah and be his heir (*Deut. XII. 19*; *XIV. 27*; *XVIII. 5*; *Num. XVI. 40*; *III. 10*). Offerings should be made forever (*Ex. XXIX. 42*). The Mosaic Sabbath should be observed forever (*Ex. XXXI. 15-17*); and the same method for washing, and the same kind of oil for ointment should be used forever. *Ex. XXX. 21, 31*.

The publication of the New Testament as a divine revelation was an abrogation of the law of Moses. The two systems are almost at the extremes of all known religious

codes for mildness and severity. It is impossible to reconcile them, and no author has attempted to do so. The declaration of Jesus that he came to fulfil the Mosaic law, to every "jot" and "tittle" (*Mat. V. 17, 18*), amounts to nothing, when we know the consequence of his teaching. And although he had not intended to abrogate it, yet since its binding force is denied in the New Testament, the two "covenants" must be considered as hostile to each other.

§ 68. The Christian's excuse for the inconsistencies of his different revelations, is that mankind, in different stages of society, required different teachings. Archbishop Whately says, "Any one who regards the Bible, as many Christians do, as *one book*, containing divine instructions, without having formed any clear notions of what does, and what does not, belong to each dispensation, will of course fall into the greatest confusion of thought. He will be like a man who should have received from his father, at various times, a great number of letters containing directions as to his conduct, from the time when he was a little child just able to read, till he was a grown man; and who should lay by all these letters with care and reverence, but in a confused heap, and should take up any one of them at random, and read it without any reference to its date, whenever he needed his father's instructions how to act." If this defense be sufficient, how are we to know that the *Koran* and the *Book of Mormon* are not divine revelations? What right have we to assert that Pythagoras and Sakya-Muni were not inspired? How do we know that the leader of the Chinese rebels and the Medicine-men of the Sioux Indians are not in direct communication with God, as they claim to be? What right have we to say that their doctrines are not suited to their respective tribes? According to this doctrine, either there is no truth, or Jehovah inspires his prophets to teach lies. Speak up plainly: which is it?

CHAPTER XIII.

B A D M O R A L I T Y .

“Religion and morality, as they now stand, compose a practical code of misery and servitude; the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf from the accursed book of God, ere man can read the inscription on his heart.”
—SHELLEY.

§ 69. If an omnipotent, all-wise, and all-good Governor of the universe should give a written revelation as a guide for men in their actions upon earth, it might reasonably be presumed that such revelation would contain a perfect code of moral law. Almost every transaction of human life has a close connection with some important question of morality, which may be said to comprise within itself the welfare of the race. And yet, all-important as moral laws are to humanity, men differ greatly in regard to them. Polygamy, concubinage, slavery, castes, despotic governments, thieving, murder, religious intolerance, celibacy, non-resistance to evil, and revenge have always been, and are now considered by some persons to be right, and by others to be wrong. Not these things alone, but a vast number of other minor matters, which come home every day to every member of society, are connected with disputed questions of morality. Certainly then, a book-revelation, if given at all, would throw new and valuable light on these points. It would expressly command our chief duties, and expressly forbid all offenses against morality, into which we are the most likely to fall. The prohibitory portion of the law would probably mention more particulars than the mandatory: as it is more easy to say what should not, than what should be done. Thus, the Mosaic decalogue contains nine prohibitory, and but one mandatory clause. And all those actions, which are of common occurrence, and have much influence on the course of human affairs, which are not expressly prohibited, are understood to be permitted and proper. Under our civil laws, every act is legal which is

not made criminal by an express law. Sometimes, however, the civil law does not prohibit deeds admitted by all to be evil, because the law could not be enforced, or for some similar reason : but no such cause can operate in moral codes which, in that character, cannot be enforced by men. The moral law finds its sanctions in the conscience alone, and it cannot omit to forbid every evil action. Every act, not prohibited in a perfect moral code, must be not only permissible, but in every respect, morally right. Every one will admit that if a moral code were given by divine revelation, it would be perfect. If these principles be correct, then I can safely declare that the Christian Scriptures are not a divine revelation.

§ 70. *The Bible legalizes Slavery.* Moses commands "of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you—of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begot in your land : and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your bondmen forever." *Lev. XXV. 45. 46.*

The passages in which the great Jewish lawgiver expressly recognised the existence, legality, and propriety of slavery are entirely too numerous to be all quoted here : and in fact, it is not necessary to quote them ; for there is not a word in the Bible against human bondage, and if there were nothing for it, it would still be permitted by the law of interpretation above referred to—a law which is well understood to be correct in all judicial tribunals. But a few more quotations and remarks on the subject may not be out of place. In the tenth commandment, the binding force of which Jesus recognised, Moses said "neither shalt thou covet thy neighbors house, his field, or his *man-servant* or his *maid-servant*, his ox or his ass" (*Deut. V. 21*). The word translated "servant" is well understood to mean slave, property. So, in another passage, the lawgiver says,

"If a man smite his *servant* or his *maid* with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished : for he is his *money*." *Ex. XXI. 20, 21.*

That passage shows the meaning of the word "servant," and shows also that the "servants" were the mere money

of their masters, so long as they were not murdered outright. Thus, we see that slavery was not only permitted and legalized, but even expressly ordained and made a duty to his chosen people, by Jehovah.

It is not to be supposed likely that God Almighty would change his views of morality : and it is not to be believed, except upon the strongest possible evidence, that he has done so. Christians, whose morality is far superior to that of the Bible, say that slavery is prohibited in the New Testament : but the thought has a wish for its father, and blindness for its mother. Jesus never said a word against slavery ; he never used the little sentence, so easily to be spoken, "human bondage is contrary to morality and should be prohibited by civil law." He never hinted any disapproval of it. He never spoke of the blessings of freedom, never lamented the miseries of slavery. He directed those who believed to sell all their property and follow him ; he did not say they should set free their slaves. He said that man's whole duty to his fellow-man was taught by Moses in the words "love thy neighbor as thyself" (*Mat. XXII. 36—40. Lev. XIX. 18*) and there is no good reason to suppose that he understood the phrase to mean anything more than Moses meant when he first used the same words. The maxim was not at all inconsistent with slavery according to the writers of the *Pentateuch*, and had Jesus adopted a different interpretation from that universally received, by those to whom he spoke, he should have said so. Jesus then recognised the legality of slavery.

And so did the apostles. Paul said not a word against it, and he had not shunned to declare "all the counsel of God" (*Acts XX. 27*). On the contrary he frequently exhorted "servants" to obey their masters, and he declared that "there is no power but of God" and thus whosoever "resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God" and should receive "damnation." So also he said that, if a man was "called" to be a "servant", that is, if he was born in slavery, he should abide in the calling, but if he should be "made free" he should accept the emancipation. The slave's attachment to the condition to which he was "called" should not be so strong, as to make him refuse freedom when offered to him (*1. Cor. VII. 20—22*). Paul was not an

abolitionist : no, he was an illustrious "doughface." But he was consistent : he worked up to his rule. He once found a fugitive slave, named Onesimus, in his congregation, and instead of putting him on some "underground railroad," he sent him back to his master Philemon, with a letter addressed to the latter, in which the self-styled "apostle" asked kind treatment for the slave, but gave no hint that slavery is wrong, or that there was anything in this case to distinguish it from that of fugitive slaves generally. Peter evidently was of the same opinion with Paul, as will sufficiently appear from a number of passages, quoted in a subsequent part of this chapter, ordering the faithful to submit to all the social and political circumstances and institutions in, or under, which they might be placed.

Neither was slavery an unknown thing in the days of Jesus, in the Roman empire. The founders of Christianity could not possibly overlook it. In the second chapter of the *Decline and Fall*, Gibbon "shows * from standard authorities that Rome at this time [during the lives of the apostles] swayed its sceptre over one hundred and twenty millions of souls ; that in every province and in every family absolute slavery existed ; that it was at least fifty years later than the date of Peter's letters, before the absolute power of life and death over the slave was *taken from the master, and committed to the magistrate* ; that about sixty millions of souls were held as property in this abject condition ; that the price of a slave was four times that of an ox ; that their punishments were very sanguinary ; that in the second century, when their condition began to improve a little, emancipation was prohibited, except for great personal merit, or some public service rendered to the state ; and that it was not till the third or fourth generation after freedom was obtained, that the descendants of a slave could share in the honors of the state. This", says Stringfellow, "*is the state, condition, or relation among the members of the apostolic churches, whether among Gentiles, or Jews, which the Holy Ghost by Paul for the Gentiles, and Peter for the Jews, recognized as lawful*". * * * *

* I quote this from "Scriptural and Statistical Views in favor of Slavery, by Thornton Stringfellow, D.D.", after having looked at Gibbon and seen that it is correct.

Now, I ask, can any man, in his proper senses, from these premises bring himself to conclude, that slavery is *abolished by Jesus Christ*, or that obligations are imposed by him upon his disciples that are subversive of the institution ? ”

No, Brother Stringfellow ! The Gospel of Jesus Christ lends neither aid nor comfort to the abominable doctrine of “inalienable human rights”, which were promulgated by the “infidels” of France, and incorporated in the American Declaration of Independence by that arch-enemy of the Gospel, Thomas Jefferson. Those Christians who assert a contrary doctrine, are afflicted by a desire to make themselves better than their Bible and their Savior ; and my candid belief, Stringfellow to the contrary notwithstanding, is, that they have succeeded, in so far as slavery is concerned.

I shall not argue the question of the morality of slavery ; I take it for granted that it is horribly wrong ; and that the Bible is wrong in approving the accursed system of human bondage.

§ 71. *The Bible sanctions polygamy and concubinage.* Abraham had a concubine, Jacob had two wives, and David and Solomon numbered their wives and concubines by the hundreds. Both, polygamy and concubinage, were common in Israel, as it appears from the Old Testament, for hundreds of years, but never were they forbidden by the law or the prophets. Moses was even in favor of concubinage, and, after a successful invasion of the Midianite territory by a Jewish army, he issued the following order—“Kill every male among the little ones [the men had been slaughtered before, in accordance with the merciful commands of Jehovah], and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the woman-children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves” (*Num. XXXI. 17, 18*). Slavery implies concubinage, and Moses made provision in his law for the case that a Jew should take a slave-woman to his bed (*Ex. XXI. 7, Deut. XXI. 11–14*). He even provides that where there are children by two wives, the eldest son shall be entitled to “a double portion of all that he [the father] hath,” even though the father hate the son and the mother, and love another wife and her son (*Deut. XXI. 15–17*). And in case that one

of several married brothers died, Moses required one of the surviving brothers to take the widow to wife in addition to the matrimonial stock on hand (*Deut. XXV. 1-9*). The great lawgiver takes frequent occasion to denounce adultery and other sins of lechery, but he never includes concubinage or polygamy under that head. The New Testament indirectly recognizes the legality of polygamy by silence in regard to it. Neither Jesus nor his apostles ever said a word against it ; and it was a common practice in their day. They could not have been ignorant of that fact. The only expression used by Christ, which can be interpreted to disapprove of polygamy, was that man and wife should be " no more twain but one flesh" (*Mat. XIX. 5, 6*). But in this phrase he only repeated the words of Moses, who said " Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh" (*Gen. II. 24*). That expression, when used by Moses, did not forbid polygamy, and why should it when used by Jesus ? Paul said every man should have " his own wife" and every woman have " her own husband" (*1. Cor. VII. 21*), but this is not sufficiently explicit to repeal the law of Moses, sanctioned by centuries of practice among God's chosen people, and finally confirmed by the silence of Jesus. The Mormons say that Paul meant that every man should have at least one wife.

§ 72. *The Pentateuch legalized revenge.* Moses said " Breach [wound] for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth ; as he that causeth a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again" (*Lev. XXIV. 20*). The Jewish law allowed, and even required the nearest relative of a man who had been killed by his fellow, to follow and slay the homicide, even if the latter was excusable or even justifiable in the killing (*Deut. XIX. 4-6*). Kitto remarks " The Mosaic law (*Num. XXXV. 31*) expressly forbids the acceptance of a ransom for the forfeited life of a murderer, although it might be saved by his seeking an asylum at the altar of the tabernacle, in case the homicide was accidentally committed (*Ex. XXI. 13, 1 K. I. 50 ; II. 28*). If, however, after Judaism had been fully developed, no other sanctuary had been tolerated but that of the Temple at Jerusalem, the chances of escape of such a homicide from the hands of the avenger ere he reached the gates of the Temple, must have

become less in proportion to the distance of the spot, where the murder was committed, from Jerusalem ; six cities of refuge were, therefore, appointed for the momentary safety of the murderer, in various parts of the kingdom, the roads to which were kept in good order to facilitate escape. Thither the avenger durst not follow him, and there he lived in safety, until a proper examination had taken place before the authorities in order to ascertain whether the murder was a wilful act or not. In the former case he was instantly delivered up to the *goel*, or avenger of blood, against whom not even the altar could protect him (*Ex. XXI. 14* ; *1 K. II. 29*) ; in the latter case, though he was not actually delivered into the hands of the *goel*, he was, notwithstanding, not allowed to quit the precincts of the town, but was obliged to remain there all his lifetime, or till the death of the high priest."

§ 73. *The Bible justifies treachery and assassination.* While the Jews were in captivity among the Moabites, Jehovah "raised up a deliverer" for his chosen people in the person of Ehud, who, pretending to have a secret errand for the king of the Moabites, was admitted to the royal presence alone, and then assassinated the monarch, thus bringing on a state of affairs, which ended in the deliverance of the Hebrews (*Jud. III. 15-22*). It does not appear from the sacred record that the king had been guilty of any wrong : on the contrary, Jehovah had "strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel," and aided him to enslave them. Not long afterward "the Lord sold" the children of Israel into the hands of Jabin, the king of Hazor, whose captain was Sisera. Sisera was defeated in a battle with the Jews, and fled from the field "to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite ; for there was peace between Jabin, the king of Hazor, and the house of Heber, the Kenite." Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn in, my Lord, turn in to me : fear not." Sisera went in, and lay down to sleep : and Jael smote a nail into his temple with a hammer, and killed him (*Jud. IV. 15-21*). This treachery and assassination, instead of being denounced as sinful, is upheld as a model of virtue, and Deborah, an inspired prophetess, (*Jud. IV. 4*), composed a song in honor of the deed. She says, "Blessed

above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, be" (*Jud. V. 24*), and gives especial praise to the deceitful cunning which preceded the assassination. Rahab, the harlot, was also elevated to high honor for treachery. *Josh. II. VI. 17, 25.*

74. *The Bible justifies oppression of the Gentiles.* The writers of the Old Testament do not recognize the human rights, or pay any regard to the feelings of the Gentiles. The Jews were justified, according to the directions of Jehovah, in taking to themselves all the possessions of the heathens, and if they resisted, they were to be slaughtered, one and all, unless with the exception of the virgins, who might be kept alive as captives and chambermaids—or chamber-girls. If a Jew was so wicked as to take a free Gentile woman to wife, he was guilty, by so doing, of a great crime, and any other Jew, if we may judge by the case of Phineas, had a right to assassinate him, and the assassin, by that deed, was certain to gain the favor of his fellow-citizens, and of the great Jehovah. The meat of the animals, which died by disease, was forbidden to the children of Israel; but they were told by Jehovah that they might sell it to the stranger within their gates. The Jew might lend money to the stranger upon interest, but not to a brother Jew. Usury demanded of the latter, would have offended Jehovah; but he cared nothing about the Gentiles. Some persons are under the impression that the Lord required his "peculiar people", when about to enter Canaan, to exterminate all the Phœnician Gentiles, dwelling therein, at once; but this is a mistake. He said "Ye may not destroy them at once, *lest the wild beasts increase upon you*". *Ex. XXIII. 29. 30. Deut. VII. 22.*

There are a few precepts of a high morality scattered through the *Pentateuch*, but they are completely lost in the great mass of grosser matter. The teaching, "love thy neighbor as thyself" is most effectively contradicted, and its influence for good destroyed, by its insertion in the midst of such a multitude of priestly rules as are contained in Leviticus. The pervading spirit of the Old Testament is wrong. The book was the work of rude men in a rude age, when every tribe in Western Asia had its exclusive language or dialect; when, for want of a common language,

and in the absence of commercial relations, there was little friendly intercourse between foreign nations, and when each tribe had its separate priesthood which found its interest in discouraging all mixture with foreign nations. The Jews, though the favorites of Heaven, were governed according to a code far more bloody and illiberal than that which prevailed among many other nations of the same ages. Morell acknowledges that "an imperfect morality is plainly discernible throughout the period of the Old Testament dispensation, and frequently embodied too in the Old Testament Scriptures. The fierce spirit of warfare, the law of retaliation, the hatred of enemies, the curses and imprecations poured upon the wicked, the practice of polygamy, the frequent indifference to deception to compass any desirable purposes, the existence of slavery, the play, generally speaking, given to the stronger passions of our nature—all these bespeak a tone of moral feeling far below that which Christianity has unfolded". Even if the writings of Moses and the other Jewish prophets had not expressly taught the Hebrews to systematically violate the rights of the poor and strange persons, yet the lineaments in which Jehovah and his favorites are painted, would be enough to show that no high morality could prevail where these Scriptures were received as divine. The Mosaic Deity was a cruel, blood-thirsty, vindictive, changeable, deceitful character, who delighted in slaying tens of thousands to avenge a fancied insult, or in leading his blind worshippers to slay the males and married women, and carry off into captivity and concubinage the unprotected virgins of some heathen tribe.

§ 75. *The New Testament teaches slavish submission to all kinds of tyranny.* The morality of Jesus is full of mildness, humility, and charity. A common expression among Christian writers is, that his moral precepts are sufficient in themselves to prove his divine mission and to entitle the Bible to our belief and reverence. Many of the greatest and purest freethinkers have not hesitated to declare that there were no rules of moral conduct equal to those contained in the Sermon on the Mount. But on this point, as in regard to the moral character of Jesus, I must put myself in opposition to the weight of authority among my friends, as well as my foes, in religious opinions. Mildness,

humility, charity, and sympathetic love for the suffering are far from making up the full list of virtues demanded by a high morality. I venture to contend that the moral teachings of Jesus are very objectionable, and that no man can live by them, or should endeavor to live by them. They are, indeed, mild and kind in spirit, but they err as much in inculcating humility, as did Moses upon the other side in encouraging his followers to hate and despise and avoid all Gentiles. The founder of Christianity could not tolerate the old Hebrew law of "an eye for an eye", and "a tooth for a tooth", and "blood for blood"—even if the first blood had been shed accidentally or justifiably; but he taught that the child must submit to the parent, the wife to the husband, the servant and the slave to the master, and the subject to the ruler; and all this unconditionally. His teaching will appear more clearly from the texts:

Servants must obey their masters. Eph. VI. 5. 7; Col. III. 22; 1. Tim. VI. 1; Tit. II. 9; 1, Pet. II. 11.

"Servants obey in all things your masters." Col. III. 22.

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters as worthy of all honor." 1. Tim. VI. 1.

"Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things." Titus II. 9.

"Servants be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." 1. Peter II. 18.

Wives must obey their husbands. Eph. V. 22—24. 33; Col. II. 18; Tit. II. 5; 1. Pet. III. 1.

"A man indeed * * is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." 1. Cor. XI. 7—9.

"The head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man." 1. Cor. XI. 2.

It would appear from these texts that as Jesus mediates between man and God, so does the husband mediate between the woman and Jesus. Is it proper for women to pray to be saved for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ? Should it not be "for the sake of Our Lord, my husband?"

The people must obey the priest. Mat. X. 14; Luke X. 16; 1. Cor. IV. 1

"Obey them that have rule over you, and submit yourselves

for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account." *Heb. XIII. 7. 17.*

Subjects must obey their Rulers.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers : For there is no power but of God ; the powers that be are ordained of God [Tyrants, demagogues and fools included]. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God ; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." *Rom. XIII. 1. 2.*

"He [the ruler] is the minister of God to thee for good." *Rom. XIII. 4.*

"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates." *Titus III. 1.*

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : whether it be to the king as supreme ; or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him." *1 Peter II. 13. 14.*

Pray and give thanks "for kings and for all that are in authority." *1, Tim. II. 2.*

Men must never resist oppression.

"I say unto you that ye resist not evil ; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." *Mat. V. 39-42.*

"Unto him that smiteth thee on one cheek, offer also the other ; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." *Luke VI. 29, 30.*

"Being persecuted, we suffer it." *1 Cor. IV. 12.*

"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." *1. Peter II. 21.*

These precepts may appear to be full of the spirit of love and humility ; they may appear very beautiful, and purely philanthropic ; but, if put in practice by any large community of men, they would be productive of more evil than the bloody code of Moses. If they be true, all political and social institutions are established with Jehovah's approval ; all magistrates, all heads of families, all slave-owners—indeed, all persons having power to injure another or compel him to service—are appointed to their positions by him ; and however evil they may appear to be, it is still the duty of every Christian to submit, and when smitten on one cheek, to turn the other. The Christian should presume that the possession of power by the wicked is destined for some good purpose by an inscrutable Providence, whose

ways are beyond human ken ; and that the oppression of the righteous is the chastening which He inflicts upon those whom he loveth. Against the human instrument who inflicts this chastening, the sufferer has no right to revolt and take up the sword. It is true that the Jews did revolt against their heathen oppressors, into whose hands they had been given by Jehovah, and he approved their conduct, and secured their success, but this was not until he was satisfied that their repentance was thorough and sincere, and that the chastening was sufficient. Besides, one of the purposes of Jesus in coming to earth was to notify the people that the old system of doing business was abrogated. And, accordingly, we find that these precepts of non-resistance to evil, because all "the powers that be [whether political, social, or physical], are ordained of God" are clear and unmistakable in meaning, coupled with no qualifications, conditions, or limitations, put forward in the most prominent portions of the New Testament ; announced very broadly in the Sermon on the Mount, repeated frequently and by the highest authorities, such as Jesus, Paul and Peter, and never contradicted expressly or impliedly by the letter or spirit of the Gospel, or by the conduct of any one recognized in it, as of authority. Jesus says "Resist not evil ;" Paul says "There is no power but of God ;" Peter commands, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man." In no place does the New Testament say or imply that if Christians be outrageously oppressed, and can easily relieve themselves of the yoke, with little pain to any one, they may resort to force to obtain the relief ; but it does say that, if the Christian be smitten on one cheek, he must "offer" the other.

The Evangelists, as interpreted by orthodox commentators, tell us ostensibly, in accordance with divine inspiration, that the omnipotent and all-wise God came down to earth to redeem mankind from sin, and to teach pure morality and religion, and lived, as a man, among men, thirty-three years. They have preserved four separate records of his actions, which, of course, we must presume from his divine nature, to have been faultless, and to have been intended as examples for all men. And Peter expressly refers the Christians to the model set before them—"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." As

Peter says, Jesus "suffered ;" he was subjected by evil men to oppression, pain, ignominy and death, and he submitted : he "suffered ;" and never, in the whole course of his life did he resist any evil offered to him ; bitter as was the cup of death, unjustly as it was offered to him, gladly as he would have rejected it, able as he was, by a word, to call twelve legions of angels from heaven to his rescue, and to overthrow instantaneously the whole Roman power, incalculably beneficial as might have been his continued residence and teaching among men, he offered no resistance ; he submitted to all the evil which his enemies saw fit to inflict on him ; and no Christian can find a word in the New Testament to justify him for acting otherwise. Letter and spirit, precept and example,—all concur in commanding believers of the Gospel to submit, without resistance, to the rod of the tyrant and the lash of the master. The tyrant and the master are the ministers "of God to him for good."

That it is impossible for men in general ever to be governed by such doctrine, is plain to every sensible man, from the teachings of every-day experience, as well as from those of universal history ; and it is also plain that it would be highly injudicious for one man or a few men alone to adopt such principles. "Make yourself sheep," says the proverb, "and the wolves will eat you." The moment, it is known, that I act on the principle of non-resistance to evil, that moment I am doomed to spoliation and slavery ; and so it would be with any man, or community, or nation of men. Few men have attempted to practice the principle ; perhaps no one ever succeeded in avoiding gross violations of it. All would be almost irresistably tempted at times to act like the Quaker passenger, in a ship-of-war, who, during a battle with a vessel of an enemy, seeing a hostile sailor climbing up the side of the vessel by a rope, hastily seized a hatchet and cut the rope, remarking, "Friend, thee can have that rope, if thee wishes."

The doctrine of passive submission is so absurd, so evidently unfit for observance in practical life, that the thinker is apt to say, "Certainly, Jesus never meant any such thing : he spoke figuratively : he intended only to teach the evil effects of greedy selfishness, the wickedness of hasty appeals to force ; he sought only to impress on the

minds of his followers, as forcibly as possible, the duty of generous self-sacrifice for the good of others, the increased happiness which would result to the race from the adoption of kindness in all intercourse with our fellows. His words do not say this, but he must have meant it. He meant something, and any other meaning would be absurd." But this interpretation is in no wise warranted by the language of Jesus, which has a plain meaning, and that meaning made yet plainer by the commentary of his conduct. To assert that Jesus in saying "resist not evil" intended to teach no more submissiveness to oppression than was practised by Aristides or Socrates, would be as unreasonable as to say that Moses in ordering the Jews to slay all the males, and married women of a heathen tribe, and to save the virgins for concubines, intended only to inculcate a proper spirit of self-defense. Besides, we shall hereafter see (chapter XV), that this doctrine of non-resistance to evil, absurd and impracticable for the active members of modern civilized society, was natural, and even absolutely necessary for Jesus. It may be said that earth would be a paradise, if all men were to practice love and non-resistance as taught in the New Testament; but what folly to talk of this, when it can never occur! Gospels should be suited to men as they are.

It has been said that the order to "obey God rather than man" (*Acts V. 29*) requires resistance to tyrants. But the idea that "resistance to tyrants is obedience to God" far from being contained in the New Testament, is contrary to its whole spirit. The subjects are bound to submit to every punishment inflicted on them, and to obey every order from their government, except in case such order should require them to violate the express law of God, as contained in the Bible. The circumstances, under which the phrase "obey God rather than man" was used, show this to be the sentiment of the apostles. The high priest forbade Peter to preach the Gospel, but Peter disobeyed that order, because it was in conflict with the express order of Jesus, "Preach the Gospel to every creature" (*Mark XVI. 15*); and after preaching, he justified himself by saying it was necessary to obey God rather than man. And when "Peter and some companions were beaten" for

violating the order of the chief priest, they did not pray to Jehovah for a legion of angels to resist the evil, but they suffered it, and went away "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His sake" (*Acts. V. 41*). So too, Christians now-a-days, who by works of uprightness, benevolence and industry, are endeavoring to preach the Gospel of Jesus and its beneficent influences, should, if oppressed by evil-doers, far from thinking^o of resistance, submit to the evil, and rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for His sake. A man may preach with deeds as well as with words : and the same code of morality should govern the preacher and the worker. In obeying God rather than man, the Christian must not presume to seek for God's commands out of his Bible : if he goes to his own conscience, he declares the Bible to be a defective code : he trespasses on the domain of the Infidel, who says the inner moral sense is a surer guide than the traditions, written or unwritten, of rude and barbarous ages. If the Christian goes to his conscience in one case, he may as well go in all cases : if his conscience decides that the moral teaching of the Bible is incomplete, that something, which *should be* there, is omitted, he may as well say that things, which *are* there, ought to have been omitted. When the Christian wishes to know God's commands, he must go to the Bible only, the revelation of God's entire will, and he must look, first of all, to the words and deeds of Jesus, and be guided by them, with all submissiveness, sternly snppressing any thought of imperfection, which may arise in his corrupt reason or conscience.

§ 76. *The New Testament makes poverty a virtue.* Jesus had a great dislike for the accumulation of wealth ; he denounced it as a great stumbling block in the way of salvation, and an offense which should be recompensed by eternal pains in the future life.

" How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of heaven ". *Mark. X. 23.*

" It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven ". *Mat. XIX. 24.*

" Sell *all* that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven ". *Luke XVIII. 22.*

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth * * * *
 Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall
 drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. * * * *
 Behold the fowls of the air : for they sow not, neither do they reap,
 nor gather into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them.
 Are ye not much better than they ? * * * * Take, therefore,
 no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for
 the things of itself". *Mat. VI. 19. 25. 26. 34.*

"Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God". *Luke VI. 20.*

"But wo unto you that are rich ! for ye have received your
 consolation". *Luke VI. 24.*

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and
 fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day ; and a certain beggar,
 named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desir-
 ing to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table :
 moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass
 that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's
 bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried ; and in hell lifted
 up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and
 Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, ' Father Abraham,
 have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of
 his finger in water, and cool my tongue : for I am tormented in this
 flame '. But Abraham said, ' Son, remember that thou in thy life
 receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but
 now he is comforted, and thou art tormented ". *Luke XVI. 19-25.*

The meaning of these texts is plain, and it is not con-
 tradicted, limited, or qualified by any others in the New
 Testament. The Son of Man had not where to lay his
 head ; the apostles had nothing save one garment, a staff,
 and a pair of sandals. The injunction of poverty was ad-
 dressed to all ; obedience to it was essential ; and a young
 man, who had, so far as appears, fulfilled all the require-
 ments of the law in regard to love for God and man, was
 not received among the disciples, because he would not sell
 all his property, and distribute it to the poor (*Luke XVIII.*
18-22). Jesus spoke of John, the Baptist, who had been
 a hermit, living in the wilderness, and eating nothing save
 grasshoppers and wild honey, as a prophet, than whom
 there was none greater born of woman ; and by this decla-
 ration, he might well be understood as approving the asce-
 tic's mode of life. The early Christians appear to have
 done their utmost to regulate their practice by the pre-
 cepts of Jesus : " All that believed were together, and had

all things in common : and sold all their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need " (*Acts II. 44. 45*). The persons who did thus, were the immediate apostles and disciples of Jesus.

How little regard is paid, among the most zealous Christians of this age, to Christ's prohibition of the accumulation of riches, is known to every one. The Christians are right, and Jesus is wrong. The voice of this age declares that poverty is not a duty, but on the contrary, where it can be avoided, a decided violation of duty. The teaching of Jesus on this point is not so admirable as that of Johnson, who says " Resolve not to be poor. Whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is an enemy to human happiness. It often destroys liberty, makes some virtues difficult, and some impracticable ". Morality requires a man to lay up treasures in this world, not extreme wealth, but still wealth. A high sense of morality does not require a rich man to despoil himself of all his property ; in fact, such a spoliation would justly be regarded in ordinary cases as an immoral act. The Christian father and Christian mother ordinarily make the art of accumulating riches the great study of their children, and tell them to bend every energy to that point ; and with every additional thousand dollars accumulated and secured, the parents' rejoicing and pride in their children increase, utterly regardless of the teaching of their Gospel that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven.

§ 77. *Jesus makes a virtue of celibacy.* One of the principal inducements for the accumulation of property, as felt by civilized men generally in this age—the supply of the wants of wife and children—was not recognised as proper by Jesus. He never taught that " every honest man should wive " ; he never told his disciples to marry ; never hinted to them that it was their duty to multiply their species. He himself was not married. So far as we know, none of his apostles married, after they had been chosen. Those of his disciples, who were married, must have deserted their wives to follow him : for women certainly could not troop about the country as Jesus and his apostles did. The relation of marriage has so much influence upon society, and

suggests itself to the moralist so often, that we cannot suppose Jesus omitted to approve of it, merely out of oversight. The omission must have been owing to the fact that he considered abstinence from sexual gratification a virtue. He prohibited divorce, except for adultery *of the wife*, but did not recommend marriage. He seems not only to have considered celibacy a virtue, but even self-castration. In his Sermon on the Mount, after saying that a lustful glance is adultery at heart, he goes on to say :

“If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee : for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell”. *Mat. V. 27-30.*

The meaning of this cannot well be misunderstood, when the context is considered. The meaning of it is—Prefer castration to adultery of the heart. Nothing else can be made out of it, if it have any meaning at all. Moralists recommend marriage : Jesus does not. Once, while he was discoursing upon the law of divorce, his disciples said unto him :

“‘If the case of the man be so with his wife [if no meanness, vice, or crime, other than adultery, will justify him in abandoning her:] it is not good to marry.’ But he said unto them, ‘All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs which were so born from their mother’s womb : and there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men : and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.’” *Mat. XIX. 10-12.*

Such is his whole answer to the question of his disciples, whether it is good to marry. Certainly, no man of sense can be so blind as to misunderstand his meaning ; his advice to his hearers is very clearly to the effect that all who had nerve enough, should use their knives. Did he practise upon his own precept ? Was he “able to receive” his own teaching ?

Paul did not view the question in precisely the same light, but in a similar one. He never advised his converts “for the kingdom of heaven’s sake” to perform a surgical operation on themselves. He advised the unmarried to abide in that condition, but “if they cannot contain, let them marry : for it is better to marry than to burn” (*1 Cor*

VII. 8. 9). Women are good plasters to cure burns ;—that is Paul's doctrine. With him, " the sole reason * for marriage is that a man may, without sin, vent his sensual desires. He teaches that *but* for this object it would be better not to marry. He wishes that all were in this respect as free as himself, and calls it a special gift of God. He does not encourage a man to desire a mutual soul intimately to share griefs and joys : one in whom the confiding heart can repose, whose smile shall reward and soften toil, whose smile shall beguile sorrow. He does not seem aware that the fascinations of woman refine and chasten society : that virtuous attachment has in it an element of respect, which abashes and purifies, and which shields the soul, even when marriage is deferred : nor yet that the union of two persons, who have no previous affection can seldom yield the highest fruits of matrimony, but often leads to the severest temptation. How *should* he have known all this? Courtship before marriage did not exist in the society open to him : hence he treats the propriety of giving away a maiden, as one in which *her* conscience, *her* likes and dislikes, are not concerned (*Cor. VII* 37, 38). If the law leaves the parent " power over his own will " and imposes no necessity to give her away, Paul decidedly advises to keep her unmarried. The author of the *Apocalypse*, a writer of the first century, who was received in the second as John the apostle, holds up a yet more degrading view of the matrimonial relation. In one of his visions he exhibits 144,000 chosen saints, perpetual attendants of ' the Lamb ', and places the cardinal point of their sanctity in the fact that ' they were not defiled with women ' but ' were virgins ' (*Rev. XIV.* 4). Marriage therefore is defilement ! "

§ 78. *The Bible degrades woman.* The Christians assert that the elevated position of woman, in civilized nations, is owing to the influence of the Bible. This is one of those wild assertions which have attained credit because many are interested in making them, and few have denied their truth or attempted to show their falsehood. Where are those Biblical passages which declare the woman to be the equal of the man ? which declare that her rights and feelings are

* F. W. NEWMAN. *Phases of Faith.*

as sacred as his? which declare that her soul is as precious as his? Where are the passages in which the prophets or apostles addressed themselves to the women, as a distinct class, except when commanding them to submit to their husbands? There are none.

There is, or has been, scarcely a nation, which has risen above the barbarous state, that did, or does, not treat its women as well, or better, than the ancient Jews did. Under the Mosaic law, a man might take as many wives as he could get; he could take as many concubines—free or slave—as he could support; and he might divorce his wife at his own pleasure. The only limit to his right of divorce was that he must give the discarded wife a paper, declaring that he had discarded her,—a ceremony which, as it appears to me, instead of being a favor to her, was only adding insult to injury. The language of Moses is as follows:

“When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some *indeanness* [!] in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it her in her hand, and send her out of his house.” *Deut. XXIV. 1.*

The divorce is thus made a matter of unlimited discretion with the husband; whenever he might pretend to find some *indeanness* in her, he might “send her out of his house.” No matter how true she might have been to him; no matter how much property she might have brought to him; no matter how many children she might have borne to him; no matter how old and friendless and poor she might be;—the husband might still turn her adrift upon an uncharitable world. As for the woman, she was so low and helpless, that it was not supposed that she could want to be divorced in any case; or at least no amount of ill-treatment on the part of her husband would enable her to get a divorce. There is nothing to show that the Jewish practice was better than the Mosaic precept, in regard to the treatment of women. David discarded his wife, Michal, because she laughed at the absurd figure which he cut dancing naked in the streets; and this was a wife to whom he was under particular obligations. The fact is recorded, without a word of disapprobation, in the sacred history. The women who are mentioned in the Bible with the highest terms

of praise, to whose history the most space is devoted, are not such as to give us a very high conception of the Jewish ideal-women. Who are the heroines of the Old Testament? What great development of womanly character was there, under the immediate superintendence of Jehovah? Esther is a fictitious character, and not an admirable one at that. Ruth was a simple country-girl, who crept at night—innocently enough, perhaps—to the bed of a male relative. The only Old Testament heroines, of distinct moral character, are Jael, the treacherous murderess, and Rahab, the harlot traitress. "These be thy Gods, O Israel!"

And what did Jesus or Paul do to alter these Mosaic precepts, or condemn the Jewish practices? The sum total of all their alterations was that Jesus prohibited divorce at the discretion of the husband, and ordered that it should be granted only for adultery—that is adultery of the wife. Jesus, like Moses, made no provision whatever to grant a divorce on application of the wife. She might consider herself fortunate if a man would receive her under his protection. Under the New, as under the Old Testament, the husband has the right to beat his wife, and enforce obedience to his commands by any means which may appear to him to be necessary. His dominion is of the same nature, and comes from the same source, with that of the political ruler and the slaveholder. He is commanded to "do to others as he would have others do to him:" but like the other two, he is left to interpret the maxim as he pleases. If he sees fit to beat his wife, she must not only submit, but submit uncomplainingly. We know that husbands were in the habit of beating their wives in the time of Jesus: was it a practice in which morality was not concerned? or was it beneath his notice?

I shall not make a long argument to show that the oppression of woman is immoral or that their elevation to social freedom, and equality with man, are among the greatest aids and safeguards for the welfare of society. These are truths, which, though their force is not fully apprehended, yet require no proof in this book.

§ 79. *The morality of the Bible is defective for the want of an exposition of the fundamental rights of individual men* No man can attain to a high morality, without pre-

viously possessing a clear idea of his own and his fellow's political and social rights. Mildness, humility, and kindness of external manner in ordinary intercourse, submission to insults and injuries, chastity, pecuniary liberality to the poor, and contempt of riches, will not suffice. In addition to these, it is necessary to comprehend the rights of personal liberty, self-government, self-defense, and social equality. He, who believes that slavery exists in accordance with divine law, can never be just to the slaves, no matter with what degree of mildness he may treat them. He, who believes that a tyrant has a "right divine to govern wrong," cannot be just to the subject. He, who thinks that polygamy is a laudable custom, in a moral point of view, can not be just to the women oppressed and degraded by it. He, who denies the right of resisting evil, cannot be just to those who are in arms to defend their rights. No man can be just to others, without knowing what justice to himself requires, and without demanding and enforcing that justice. He who submits to a very unjust act, and confesses that duty requires him to submit, while he has abundant means to resist successfully, commits an offense against humanity. He encourages injustice, and weakens the force of those sanctions, without which morality never has been and never can be maintained among men. He, who habitually grants to others more than they are entitled to, and makes his grants in a slavish manner, encourages them to over-estimate their rights and to commit injustice again. All our highest ideals of just men, (such as Epaminondas, Aristides and Timoleon among the Greeks), were men who had thought long and seriously of their rights and duties, and who were scarcely less strenuous and exacting, in demanding and enforcing their rights than in performing their duties. That a knowledge of our rights is requisite for a high morality is implied in the phrase "Do to others as you would have them do to you." The first question is, what should others do to you. .

A high morality demands words as well as deeds. It requires not only that a man's actions shall be just, but also that he shall counsel and encourage others to do justice, that he shall give his moral support to every one who performs his duties and exacts his rights. The man, who is

notoriously and deeply oppressed, has not only a right to resist oppression, but he has also a right to an active expression of public opinion in his favor. The denial of his rights by the public, their indifference to his sufferings, and their failure to approve his conduct, are offenses against society and morality.

But all the deeds and words required to support the cause of justice, are not matters which come intuitively to the human mind. The love of justice is an innate faculty, but the requirements of justice, the rules of morality, are only to be understood, after long and deep study of the varied relations of life : and this is true not only of the minute rules, but even of some of what we ordinarily consider the first principles of justice. The ancient Hebrew, whose brother had been killed, was bound to slay the homicide, though the first slaying was accidental or justifiable. Many of the Thugs never supposed that thuggee was wrong : and writers on Hindostan say that a Thug was never known to offend a woman's modesty, before killing her. The vast majority of the Sudras of Hindostan do not believe that any injustice is done them by the institutions which keep their caste in a state of the most abject inferiority and subjection to the Brahmins. Many of the women, slaves, and subjects of the present day, oppressed by political and social inequality, do not doubt the absolute right of their masters to govern them as they are governed. Socrates did, and openly, without shame, spoke of deeds, which we dare not mention. Many Spartans, who intended to do no more than was just, supposed that a successful and well-managed theft by a boy, was very commendable : and if asked why they did not treat others, as they would wish to be treated, they would have replied, that they did : that if a boy could steal anything from them without detection at the time, he would be doing right, and they would applaud him for it. And they would have defended with considerable plausibility the morality of stealing in their community. They would have shown the benefits of watchfulness, and acuteness developed by their system, and the evil influences of the accumulation of great wealth in the hands of a few families, as exemplified in neighboring states, and the selfishness, luxury, degenerate habits and

want of patriotism, which generally flowed from a system calculated to encourage individuals to give all their time and energies to the increase of pecuniary wealth.

The code of morality in the New Testament is defective, because it fails to set forth the fundamental rights of man, and his particular duties. Jesus never said expressly or by implication, that personal liberty, political and social equality, religious toleration, and a share in the soil, in the accumulated property of former ages, are inalienable human rights. He never spoke of the moral progress of the race, a confidence in which is a not unimportant aid to the cause of morality. His moral rules were very scanty and not much, if at all, superior to those of contemporary or earlier teachers in heathen lands. His valuable moral teaching was limited to the phrase, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"; but this was a general principle which the greatest tyrant could proclaim while oppressing his subjects, and declare that his tyranny and cruelty were just and necessary for the preservation of order and good government. This general principle may be interpreted, and is interpreted, to justify the greatest wrongs. Millions of slaves are held in deep ignorance, superstition, and moral debasement, by Christian masters, who assert that justice to the slave requires, that he should be held in hereditary bondage. The moralist must not stop at the maxim "Be just." That maxim is not new; man learns it so soon as he arrives at consciousness as a moral being, as a member of society. The moralist was not needed to announce it. It is the necessary teaching of an innate moral sense, which is never wanting to a sane man, and the active influence of which may or might be seen in the conduct of every tribe of men, who live or have ever lived. The moralist is needed to set forth particularly what justice is: and without that exposition, there is no great moral code: and for the want of such an exposition, the New Testament is defective.

Christian morality, as the morality of the most enlightened nations of our age is termed, is said by Christians to be the offspring—the natural and necessary offspring—of the New Testament; but it really does not owe its origin to any such source. It has grown with our political and

social institutions in a perfectly natural and gradual development through many ages ; and it will continue to grow, becoming better and purer as men become freer from superstition, ignorance, and political, social, and pecuniary bondage. Our morality is better than that of our forefathers three centuries ago ; and that of enlightened nations in two centuries from this time, will be superior to ours. Our morality is the product of the combined influence of our natural character and education, and it has progressed, not only to a considerable extent without the aid of the Bible, but even in despite of it. If it were due only to the Bible, we should know no such thing as progress in morality ; the moral code of the Christian world in the XIXth century should be the same as it was in the XVth ; whereas we know that there has been a very great change. Christians think that their Gospel, as the Word of God ; must teach what is right, and they torture its meaning to suit their ideas. Thus, while the Bible condemns women, slaves and subjects to hopeless and unresisting submission to their condition, many of the ablest Christian moralists deny its plain signification on these points, and assert that the influence of their Gospel has been, and always will be the most effective agent to overthrow all kinds of political and social bondage ; and just as the progress of mental enlightenment and pecuniary prosperity bring with them a purer morality, just at that rate do they claim additional merit for the Bible. That book happens to be received as divinely inspired among the most enlightened and moral nations ; but it has never made them what they are. We have no right to complain of the Bible, as a human composition, because faith in it has not prevented the debasement of Mexico, or did not prevent the mental darkness and moral degradation of Southern Europe during the dark ages. The superior enlightenment and morality of the Saracens of Spain as compared with the whole Christian world, in the Ninth and Tenth centuries after Jesus, was not owing to the Koran ; nor was the superiority of the ancient Greeks and Romans over all contemporary nations for many centuries owing at all to the truth of their mythology. But, when the Bible is held forth as a divine revelation, we must condemn it for the evils which it has failed to correct.

CHAPTER XIV.

DOCTRINES NOT ORIGINAL.

"Tze Kunz asked if there was any one word which expresses the proper conduct of one's whole life. Confucius [500 B. C.] replied, 'Will not the word *shoo* [love?] do it, i. e. do not to others what you do not wish them to do to you.'—*The Four Books. XV. 23.*—Translated by Rev. David Collie.

Confucius said, "I compile and transmit to posterity, but write not anything new. I believe and love the ancients, taking Laou Pang for my pattern."—*Same. VII. 1.*

§ 80. Were the doctrines of the Bible original with the authors of that book? If they were, there is a strong presumption that it is of a higher than human origin. The Bible was not written till men had lived many centuries upon the earth, nor till many studious and great men had thought deeply and written wisely of religion, morality, and civil government. Upon these and all similar subjects, original ideas are scarce, and he who would in this day compose an entirely new set of practicable rules for the action of men, under any and all circumstances in which they might be placed, would be almost entitled to recognition as an inspired prophet. If, on the other hand, it appear that the ideas advanced in the Bible were not original with its authors, we shall be justified in presuming that the book is a mere fraudulent human compilation. Where would be the necessity or propriety of revealing from heaven something that was previously known among men? It has been said that, to induce men to observe the laws of morality, it was necessary that they should believe that these laws were directly sanctioned by the Almighty God, that their violation would be visited by his wrath and eternal vengeance, and that, to give this sanction, a revelation was required. This argument may be worthy of consideration, though it might be used as well in favor of a counterfeit as of a genuine revelation. At least no one will deny that it would

be far more satisfactory to believers to have an entirely original revelation than to have a mere rehash of long-recognized truths. Unfortunately for the claims of the Bible to be a God-given revelation, it does not contain one important doctrine of a general character which can be proved to be original, while there is conclusive proof in regard to most of the prominent ideas, and strong evidence as to the remainder, to show that they were learned by the Hebrew prophets and Christian apostles from the priests and philosophers of the Heathen nations, or from that general sense of right and propriety which is common to all mankind.

§ 81. *Christianity is a mere revamp of Boodhism.* It is a creed cobbled together from ideas which had, for centuries, before the time of Jesus, been extensively received in Hindostan, Greece, and other lands connected with Judea by a frequent, if not a constant, intercourse. The evidence is at hand to sustain this assertion.

No intelligent man can study and compare the systems of Boodhism and Christianity with each other, without being astonished at their resemblance. Milman and Remusat both speak of Boodhism as "the Christianity of the East": forgetting, or wilfully shutting their eyes to the fact, that the more proper designation of the relation of these systems, according to the date of their origin, would be to style Christianity "the Boodhism of the West." And such it really is—nothing more. Both religions have the same universal, form-free character, the same mild morality, similar speculative doctrines, and the same general system of church-organization: both were founded on the ruins of older creeds, marked by the same features of exclusiveness, harshness, ecclesiastical dominion, and popular subjection: both were first taught to men by incarnate, virgin-born Gods, who are looked upon by their respective followers as the "Saviors" of mankind; both have been adopted by numerous and unconnected nations; and each has somewhere near 300,000,000 nominal believers—a far greater number than any other form of faith ever has acquired, and probably more than any other priest-born creed ever will acquire.

Brahminism was the foundation of Boodhism, as Judaism of Christianity. Under the Brahminic system, Brahma had

selected the Hindoos, to be his peculiar people. he revealed himself to them alone, he taught them to abhor and avoid all foreigners, he selected one family to furnish all the kings, and another to furnish all the priests, and he required the whole people to observe strictly a complicated ceremonial law, in which one of the prominent points was worship by sacrifice.

✓ The Boodhists do not deny the divine origin of Brahminism, but say it was superseded by their later revelation. Boodhism teaches that all nations are alike before God ; that its revelation is addressed to all mankind, and can be accepted by all on equal terms ; that the faithful Boodhist must not abhor, but must love the foreigners ; that observance of the Brahminic laws of sacrifice, of unclean meats, and the old religious ceremonies generally, confers no merit ; that the priesthood is confined to no one class ; and that the principal virtues are love to God and man, faith, humility, charity, and passive submission to oppression. The virtues of Boodhism have the same ascetic cast as those of Christianity. The Boodhists, like their Western imitators, have a tri-une God, with a Savior for one of the divine persons.

The life of this Savior, Sakya-Muni, bears much similarity to that of Jesus. He was an incarnate God, and was born of a married virgin, of royal blood. He spent six years in the wilderness as a hermit, and, having been purified by penance, he went to the populous districts of Hindostan, and to the sacred city of Benares, where he preached the gospel of Boodhism, wrought miracles, and made numerous converts. Sakya did not commit his doctrine to writing, but after his death, his disciples composed numerous sacred books, containing records of his life and teachings.

There is a strong resemblance between the government and ceremonies of the Boodhist and Roman Catholic Churches. "The monastic habit, holy water, counting rosaries to assist in prayer, the ordinances of celibacy and fasting, and reciting masses for the dead, worship of relics and canonization of saints are alike features of Boodhism and Romanism. Both burn candles, and incense and bells are much used in their temples : both teach a purgatory from which the soul can be delivered by prayers, and use a

dead language for their liturgy and their priests pretend to work miracles." *

The faith of Boodha spread as rapidly and as extensively, and by as peaceable means, as that of Christ, and found more favor beyond the limits of its birthland, than in it. The morality of Boodhism is praised by nearly all writers upon the system as little if at all inferior to that of Christianity, and its influence is said to have been very beneficent. There is abundant evidence of the truth of what is here stated of Boodhism and its founder, and no learned man can deny or does deny that Sakya-Muni preceded Jesus by five hundred years. On these two points all the late writers on Boodhism, of the first reputation, are agreed—Hodgson, Hardy, Remusat, Klaproth, Cunningham, Bjornstjerna and St. Hilaire. Every sensible man will admit that the resemblance is so great, that the later system must be considered as a copy of the older one, if it can be shown that Jesus and the early Christians had any means of becoming acquainted with the doctrines of Sakya. That can be shown. Sakya said "My law is a law of mercy for all," and his disciples attached great importance to the conversion of the Gentiles—that is nations not of the Hindoo race. A great Boodhistic synod was held in the year 241 B. C. † which sent out nine missionaries, and these, it is reported, made 6,000,000 converts. Vast numbers of missionaries were sent out to far distant countries, and their enterprise and self-denial was little inferior to those of the later pioneers of Christianity. Traces of Boodhistic doctrine in Europe are to be found in very early times. Bjornstjerna says that the Druids copied many of their doctrines from the Boodhists, whose faith they learned from Phœnician traders. The Woden of the Skandinavians is supposed by many authors to be identical with Boodha. It is certain that the Boodhistic faith was known in Greece before the time of Jesus. "The famous doctrines of Pythagoras" says Cunningham "are intensely Boodhistical." Pythagoras was copied by Plato, and Plato was copied by St. John. The expedition of Alexander [330 B. C.] to the banks of

* WILLIAMS. Middle Kingdom. Huc. Travels in Tartary. Vol. I Ch. V. Vol. 2. Ch. II. III.

† ALEXANDER CUNNINGHAM. Bhilsa Topes. Ch. X.

the Ganges brought the Greeks and the Hindoos into an intimate acquaintance with each other. The Essenes, a Jewish sect, with whom Jesus appears to have been intimate, derived many of their doctrines from the Boodhists—a fact now generally admitted—and some authors of reputation have described them as Boodhists. John the Baptist is supposed to have been a member of this sect.

The teachings of the immortality of the soul and eternal rewards and punishments in a future life were not received in purity by the great body of the Boodhists, but the Christians could have copied them from many sources, more particularly from the Platonists. “The Platonic theology is wonderfully near to the Christian [why not say the Christian is near to the Platonic—the new to the old?]—in the tenets of the being, nature, name, qualities, and works of God; and in the Platonic ethics, there is often an astonishing resemblance to the Christian, as in the doctrines in regard to the nature and dignity of the soul, the nature and influence of sin, the nobility and essence of virtue, the immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments”.* Plato preceded Jesus by four centuries, and his teachings, within two centuries after his death, had spread to all the countries bordering on the eastern end of the Mediterranean. While the son of Mary was still in obscurity, Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, was famous for his writings in which he set forth and defended the Platonic doctrines.

§ 82. *The Mosaic law was a mere copy from the Egyptian.* There was a wonderful similarity between the religious doctrines and ceremonies of the Jews and Egyptians—a similarity too great by far to permit any reasonable man to believe that those nations derived their creeds and forms from different sources. This similarity will reduce us to a dilemma—we must believe either that the Egyptians copied from Moses, or that the latter copied from the former; and if the Hebrew law-giver be proved to have obtained his ideas from the Egyptians, we can hardly be expected to believe that he got them from Jehovah. It was the common belief among the most intelligent of the ancient Greeks that the kingdom of Egypt, with its civil and religious forms, reached back into the most remote antiquity, far

* C. ACKERMANN. Das Christliche in Plato.

earlier than any other nation near the Mediterranean. Such was the opinion of Solon (600 B. C.) one of the most learned men of his time, and he formed his opinion after conversing with the priests of Memphis. When Hecatæus visited Egypt, the priests took him into a large consecrated chamber, and there showed him the wooden statues of all the high priests of the kingdom, three hundred and forty-one in number, going back consecutively from his time to the foundation of the monarchy : and these statues had been made in the life-time of the respective originals, "who were all men and the sons of men".

The Egyptians had an elaborate religious creed and a complex ceremonial. "Superstitiously attached to their sacred institutions, and professing a religion which admitted much outward show, the Egyptians clothed their ceremonies with all the grandeur of solemn pomp ; and the celebration of their religious rites was remarkable for all that human ingenuity could devise to render them splendid and imposing. They prided themselves on being the nation in which originated most of the sacred institutions afterwards common to other people". * If the history of Abraham and his descendants, as given in *Genesis*, be true, the Jews, when they entered Egypt, were a few score of rude shepherds, who had never dwelt in houses, or had a permanent place of residence, who were unskilled in all the higher arts of civilized life, ignorant of letters, and destitute of enlightened, clear or positive ideas of religion or government. At this time (1700 B. C.) Egypt was already a kingdom of long standing, containing a dense and prosperous agricultural population, long accustomed to dwell in houses, skilled in the arts of peace and war, familiar with the use of hieroglyphical letters, and living under social, political and religious systems among the most complex ever devised by man. These facts are in substance asserted by all the great and celebrated men who have investigated the antiquities of Egypt. "It is indeed a remarkable fact that the first glimpse we obtain of the history and manners of the Egyptians, shows us a nation already far advanced in all the arts of civilized life ; and the same customs and inventions that prevailed in the Augustan age of the people, after the ac-

† J. G. WILKINSON. Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians

cession of the eighteenth dynasty are found in the remote age of Osirtasen, the cotemporary of Joseph, nor can there be any doubt that they were in the same civilized state when Abraham visited the country". * In the midst of this polished nation the Hebrews lived, poor, rude, engaged in an occupation particularly degrading in the eyes of the Egyptians, and finally reduced to unconditional slavery. Moses was born on the bank of the Nile, he was bred in the family of the Pharaohs, and he could not have avoided learning much of the politics and religion of the Egyptian kingdom. The author of the *Acts*, writing ostensibly by divine inspiration, says "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians". Under the leadership of Moses, the Jews escaped from Egypt, and after they entered Arabia, their chief gave them a code of laws, which are found to bear a wonderful resemblance to the laws of the land they had left. Under these circumstances, what reasonable man can believe that the Egyptians copied from the Jews? The former, a long-established and prosperous nation before the Jews existed, powerful, civilized, particularly priding themselves on the antiquity of their religious institution,—could they in the height of their prosperity, while the children of Israel were still always at war or in captivity with the Philistines, have copied the institutions of a hostile and despised and enslaved race, which had no laws until after it escaped from the brick-yards of the Nile? If there were any room for doubt, it would be removed by an examination of the existing monuments of the ancient Egyptians. The paintings and sculptures on the temples, obelisks and pyramids nearly, if not quite five thousand years old, confirm in the most explicit language the assertion of Wilkinson, that the customs of the country were the same long before the time of Moses as they were when Solon and Herodotus visited Memphis to learn wisdom, and returned to their native land with the opinion that the Egyptians were, not only the most ancient, but also the wisest of nations. Let us now examine whether, and in how far the religious institutions, ceremonies and ideas of the Hebrews and Christians resembled the institutions, ceremonies and ideas of the Egyptians and of other peoples.

* KERICK. *Ancient Egypt*.

Moses gave to his followers a sacred book, but before Abraham was born, the Egyptian priests had had their sacred books. The Hindoo Rig-Veda is supposed to date from about 1400 B. C. It was composed before the Brahminic theocracy had arisen, and Brahminism had its origin at least as early as 1200 B. C. There were also sacred books in China and Persia in ancient times, and there is no evidence that they did not exist as early as the *Pentateuch*. The books of Moses contained an account of the creation of the universe, the early history of the human race, the origin of the Jewish people, the genealogy of the principal families, a code of political, social and religious laws, and prophecies of future events. The sacred books of the Egyptians and other nations contained similar matter. The Jews, like the Egyptians and Hindoos, had no law of human origin.

The Jewish legislator established a priesthood with great wealth and political power, and made the priestly office hereditary in one family or tribe, as had been done many centuries earlier in the valleys of the Nile, the Euphrates and the Ganges.

Solomon erected a temple to the Lord one thousand years before Christ, but temples to the gods were common in Egypt, Chaldea, Phœnicia and Hindostan, many ages previous to that time. Ruins of religious edifices, built while the Jews were as yet unknown, are still standing on the sites of the Egyptian cities. The Philistines had a temple to Dagon before the time of Solomon (1 S. V. 2). Bishop Kitto gives it as his opinion, from the description of the holy of holies, that that place "was an adytum [a secret apartment] without windows"; and "The Lord said he would dwell in a thick darkness" (1 K., VIII. 12). The Egyptian temples had an adytum without windows, for the accommodation of their divinities.

Among the Israelites, and in accordance with the Mosaic laws, there were men who were prophets by profession; there were also prophets among heathen nations—the Egyptians, Greeks, Phœnicians, Persians and Chaldeans. Herodotus, who lived 460 years before Christ, wrote "The art of predicting future events in the Greek temples came also from the Egyptians, and it is certain that they were the first people who established festivities, public assemblies, proces-

sions, and the proper mode of communing with the Deity." Yet we learn from Homer that some of the Grecian oracles were already celebrated at the time of the Trojan war (1100 B. C.)

The Jews had an Ark of the Covenant (*Josh. III.*, 13 ; *2 S.*, *XV.* 24 ; *1 Ch.*, *XV.*, 2, 15), a box in which the Lord was supposed to make his home ; and so sacred was it, that, according to Moses, its mere touch was death to all but the priests. This ark was copied from the Egyptian ark, sacred boat or great shrine, which was carried in procession by the priests, as the Mosaic ark was borne by the Levites. The gods of the ancients were supposed to travel considerably, and to be entitled to the most honorable conveyance known. In the hills and plains of Greece, a chariot was the most fashionable vehicle for travelling, and in the Grecian pictures, the gods are represented in their chariots. But the settled portion of Egypt was confined to the bottom land of its great valley, subject to overflow every year, and intersected with large and numerous canals. There chariots were little used, and boats were the more ancient and honorable means of conveyance ; and, accordingly, the gods of Egypt were painted as sitting in boats, and were carried about in procession in boats. Moses did not see why his divinity could not travel in a boat as well in Judea as in Egypt, and he adopted the boat shrine.

It was on the model of the Egyptian shrine that "the Ark of the Covenant of the Hebrews appears to have been constructed, which contained the tables of the law, the pot of manna, and the rod of Aaron. The mixed figures of the cherubim, which were placed at either end and overshadowed it with their wings, has a parallel in some of the Egyptian representations, in which kneeling figures spread their wings over the shrine."*

Hengstenberg says that "as regards the significance of the cherubim, their real agreement, in this particular, with the Egyptian Sphinxes cannot be doubted." Kitto, in his *Biblical Cyclopedia*, for the purpose of explaining what the cherubim were, introduces engravings of Egyptian Sphinxes—figures of various animals, with great outstretched wings. Some of these Egyptian figures appears to be exact pictures of the Hebrew "Seraphim," which were probably nearly

* KENRICK, *Ancient Egypt*. Ch. XXI. Sec. II.

the same with the Cherubim. Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a throne, and above it stood the seraphim. Each one had six wings : " with twain he covered his face ; and with twain he covered his feet ; and with twain he did fly " (*Is. VI. 2*). No one will assert that Judaism is older than the Egyptian drawings and sculptures of their sphinxes.

The religious ceremonies of the Hebrews bore a remarkable resemblance to those of the Egyptians. The Jews considered Jerusalem a holy city (*Is. II. 2* ; *Ps. LXIII. 15*), and attributed great religious merit to pilgrimages thither. In the valley of the Nile there were holy places also. The great temple of Artemis, at Bubastis, was visited by 700,000 pilgrims annually, if we can believe the report of Herodotus, who visited Egypt while the ancient superstition was still in full favor with the people.

The Egyptians offered sacrifices of vegetables and animals to the gods, and so did the Jews. The Jewish and Egyptian priests slew the sacrificial animals in the same manner, by cutting the throat. The Egyptians preferred red oxen, without spot, for sacrifice ; and Moses directed the selection of a red heifer (*Num. XIX. 2*). The custom of the scapegoat (*Lev. XIV. 21*) was common to both nations. A sacred fire was kept continually burning in the temples of Thebes as well as in Judea (*Lev. VI. 12, 13*). Egyptian priests took off their shoes in the temples, and Joshua took off his shoes in a holy place (*Josh. V. 16*). The Egyptian priests danced before their altars, and the same custom prevailed in Jerusalem (*Ps. CXLIX. 3*). The practice of circumcision, claimed by Moses as a divine ordinance, communicated to Abraham, is proved by the monuments of Egypt to have been fully established there, at a time long antecedent to the alleged date of Abraham. Herodotus wrote that, in his time, " The Phœnicians and Syrians say they learned it [circumcision] from the Egyptians." The Egyptians had their unclean meats, including pork, as well as the Jews. The Egyptians anointed their kings and priests long before there were any kings or priests in Israel. The Urim and Thummim (*Ex. XXXIX. 8, 10* ; *Lev. VIII. 8*) which play a stupid part in the books of Moses and Jo. Smith, were once not inappropriate figures

of Re, the god of light, and Thmei, the goddess of justice (whence the Greek "Themis"), worn on the breasts of Egyptian judges.

Moses taught the existence of only one God, or at least the Jews of a late period believed in and worshipped only one God. The Egyptian people worshipped many gods, but the priests of Egypt, as well as of ancient India, were monotheists. There was one doctrine for the initiated, another for the vulgar. The deity was called "I am" in Hebrew: and the same term is applied to the deity in the Institutes of Menu, and was applied by the Phœnicians to their great god. The ancient Jews held, and the modern Jews hold, the name of "Jehovah" in great reverence. A devout Jew considers the mere utterance of the word to be blasphemy. Our English Bible says, "He that uttereth the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death" (*Lev. XXIV. 16*). The Jews say this is an improper translation: it should be "He that uttereth the name of Jehovah" &c. The Septuagint says "Whoever uttereth the name of the Lord" &c. Michaelis thought that the Jews and the Septuagint are right. The Egyptians had a reverence precisely similar for the name of Osiris. Even Herodotus, after having been at Memphis, when writing about that divinity, would not use his name. Moses represented Jehovah as having a human shape, coming down to earth, visiting and conversing with men, causing all the occurrences of nature by immediate efforts of his will, frequently performing miracles, and empowering men to do miracles, and to foretell the future, choosing individual men and a particular nation to be his favorites, and establishing certain families to be kings and priests of his "peculiar people" for ever. Such ideas were familiar to all the ancient nations about the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Jehovah led the armies of Israel to battle: and the gods of the Greeks, Phœnicians, and Egyptians were also reputed to be terrible in warring for their worshippers.

The Hebrew Scriptures, in some passages, exhibit a high conception of the divine attributes. According to Robertson, the following was the idea of God, as expressed by the ancient Brahmins: "As God is immaterial, he is above all conception; as he is invisible, he can have no form: but

from what we behold of his works, we may conclude that he is eternal, omnipotent, knowing all things, and present everywhere”.

Moses represents many of the most important events of the early history of the world to have happened in or near Judea: and almost every ancient nation held the same views in regard to its own soil. An orator in the Island of Crete, on a public occasion, once spoke thus: * “Upon this Isle all the arts were discovered. Saturn gave you the love of justice and your peculiar simplicity of heart. Vesta taught you to erect houses. Neptune taught you to build ships. You owe to Ceres the culture of grain, to Bacchus that of the vine, and to Minerva that of the olive. Jupiter destroyed the giants which threatened you. Hercules delivered you from the serpents, wolves, and other noxious animals. The authors of so many benefits, admitted by you to divine honors, were born on this soil and are now occupied in laboring for your happiness”. Cory, in the preface to his “Ancient Fragments”, says “In ancient times it was the prevailing custom of all the nations, including Egypt, India, Phœnicia, and Greece, to appropriate to themselves, and assign within their own territorial limits, the localities of the grand events of primeval history, with the birth and achievements of the gods and heroes, the deluge, the origin of the arts, and the civilization of mankind.”

The history of Creation, as given in *Genesis*, is a mere compilation of ancient traditions prevalent in the East, and similar traditions are given by Sanchoniathan, an old Phœnician author. Moses informs us that Abraham was the peculiar favorite of Jehovah, and was to be the father of the chosen people. This name Abraham is probably derived from the Hindoo Brahm, † the great spirit, the origin of all things, the creator of all other existences. Abraham was called Abram until late in life, according to *Genesis* *XVII.* 5, and he is said to have come from Ur of the Chaldees, a point east of Canaan, either on the Euphrates or farther east—possibly Hindostan itself, the home of Brahm-

* So given in Barthelémy's *Anacharsis*.

† Brahm, derived from the same root as the Latin word *primus*, (first), the Celtic word *prímh* (chief), and the Gothic word *frum* (origin, beginning). It is supposed that our “from” is from “*frum*.”

inism. His name, his birth place, and his position as father of the chosen people, all suggest the derivation from the Hindoo Brahm.

“Even the traditionists among the Jews”, says Milman, “allowed that the names of the angels came from Babylon”.

Thus we have gone over the most prominent points wherein the ideas advanced in the Old Testament resemble ideas accepted among many nations existing during the time of the Jews. Although Moses evidently derived his principal doctrines from the Egyptians, yet the latter nation had many usages and principles of religion and politics, which the Jews did not see fit to adopt. The Egyptians believed in the immortality of the soul, in future rewards and punishments, in the adoration of numerous animals, and in the worship of idols. It is a matter of wonder that Moses rejected the doctrine of a future life ; perhaps the idea was too refined for the grossness of the people, who worshipped the golden calf : perhaps he thought it inconsistent with his doctrine of the full execution of divine justice on all men during their natural lives.

The religious ceremonies of the Egyptians and Jews were so similar that the Roman law, in the time of the Emperors to prohibit the worship of Isis in the capital, spoke of the Jewish worship as though it were not distinguishable from that of the Egyptians. And yet, the external ceremonies of both Jews and Egyptians, must have been familiar to the people who were masters of both of them.

§ 83. Next in order for our consideration are particular doctrines of the New Testament. The tri-une nature of God was the commonly received doctrine in Egypt and India many centuries before the time of Jesus. “The supreme being of the Hindoos is Brahm,—incomprehensible by any human understanding ; pervading and comprehending all things. Originally he reposed in the contemplation of himself ; subsequently his creative word has caused all things to proceed from him, by a succession of continued emanations. As creator he is named Brahma ; as the preserving power, Vishnou ; as the destroyer and renovator of the forms of matter, Siva. These three relations of the divine being constitute the trinity of the Hindoos.”* “The

* TENNEMAN, History of Philosophy.

great gods of Egypt were Neph, Amun, Pthah, Khem, Sate, Maut, Bubastus and Neith, one of whom generally formed, in connection with other two, a triad [Trinity], which was worshipped by a particular city or district, with a peculiar veneration. In these triads, the third member proceeded from the other two ; that is, from the first by the second—thus, the intellect of the Deity, having operated on matter, produced the result of these two under the form and name of the world, and on a similar principle appear to have been formed most of their speculative combinations. The third member of a triad, as might be supposed, was not of equal rank with the two from whom it proceeded ; and we therefore find that Khonso, the third person in the Theban triad, was not one of the great gods, as were the other two, Amun and Maut ; Horus, in the triad of Philæ, was inferior to Osiris and Isis ; and Anouke to Neph and Sate, in the triad of Elephantine and the Cataracts.” *

The doctrine of the incarnation is probably as old as the trinity. “Wherever any approximation had been made to the sublime truth of the one great First Cause, either awful religious reverence or philosophic abstraction has removed the primal Deity entirely beyond the sphere of human sense, and supposed that the intercourse of the Divinity with man, the moral government, and even the original creation had been carried on by the intermediate agency, either in oriental language of an emanation, or in Platonic of the Wisdom, Reason or Intelligence of the one Supreme. * * *

This was the doctrine from the Ganges or even the shores of the Yellow Sea to the Ilissus : it was the fundamental principle of the Indian religion and Indian philosophy ; it was the basis of Zoroastrianism ; it was pure Platonism ; it was Platonic Judaism in the Alexandrian School. *

* * The more ordinary representative, as it were, of God to the sense and mind of man, was the Memra or the Divine Word ; and it is remarkable that the same appellation is found in the Indian, the Persian, the Platonic and the Alexandrian [and the Christian] systems”. †

“The doctrine of Buddhism contains nothing but the main idea of the heroic poems of the Brahmins, fully understood

* WILKINSON.

† MILMAN. History of Christianity Book I. ch. II.

and consequentially carried out—that is, that a man freeing himself by holiness of conduct from the obstacles of nature, may deliver his fellow-men from the corruption of their times, and become a benefactor, redeemer of his race, and also become a supreme God—a Boodha”. * Wilkinson says “At Philæ, where Osiris [the Egyptian savior and incarnate God, who came down to earth to battle with Typho, the evil spirit] was particularly worshipped, and which was one of the places where they supposed him to have been buried, his mysterious history is curiously illustrated in the sculptures [made 1700 B. C.] of a small retired chamber lying nearly over the western adytum of the temple. His death and removal from this world are there described ; the number of twenty-eight lotus plants points out the period of years he was thought to have lived on earth ; and his passage from this life to a future state is indicated by the usual attendance of the Deities and Genii, who presided over the funeral rites of ordinary mortals. He is there represented with the feathered cap, which he wore in his capacity of Judge of Amenti, and this attribute shows the final office he held after his resurrection, and continued to exercise toward the dead at their last ordeal in a future state”. Again: “Osiris was called ‘the opener of truth’, and was said to be ‘full of grace and truth’. He appeared on earth to benefit mankind, and after having performed the duties he had come to fulfill, and fallen a sacrifice to Typho, the evil principle (which was at length overcome by his influence, after leaving the world), he arose again to new life, and became the judge of mankind in a future state”. Herodotus saw the tomb of Osiris at Sais, nearly five centuries before Christ. Similar redeemers were worshipped in other lands, and like Jesus many of them were born of virgins. Grote, speaking of the early legends of Greece, remarks that “the furtive pregnancy of young women—often by a god—is one of the most frequently recurring incidents in the legendary narratives”.

The teaching that belief in Jesus as the Son of God is the highest virtue or merit before the Almighty is not original. Crishna, a Hindoo divinity, says “Works affect

* RITTER. History of Ancient Philosophy. Ch. II.

me not, nor have I any expectations from the fruit of works. He, who believeth me to be even so, is not bound by works”.

But it is claimed that the great merit of the New Testament is in its moral teachings, which are entirely original in their best features. These moral teachings are contained in such expressions as “Love thy neighbor as thyself” “Love is the fulfilment of the law” “Return good for evil;” and “All that ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for this is the law and the prophets.” The fact that such phrases are made the foundation to claims of originality or peculiar merit, shows the ignorance of the people, and the unscrupulous policy of the clergy. The doctrine that love is the fulfilment of the law, taught in the New Testament with much emphasis, and the chief merit of the book in the eyes of many, is as old as human society. It was taught by Plato in almost the identical words ascribed to Jesus, and “*Platonic* love” is a phrase familiar to all civilized ears. We still have the writings of the great teacher of the Academy, wherein he says “Love* is peace and good will among men, calm upon the waters, repose and stillness in the storm, the balm of sleep in sadness. Before him all harsh passions flee away; he is the author of soft affections, destroyer of ungentle thoughts, merciful and mild, the admiration of the wise, the delight of the gods. Love divests us of alienation from each other, and fills our vacant hearts with overflowing sympathy: he is the valued treasure of the unfortunate, and desired by the unhappy, (therefore unhappy because they possess him not,) the parent of grace, of gentleness, of delicacy: a cherisher of all that is good, but guileless as to evil; in labor and in fear, in longings of the affections, or in soarings of the reason, our best pilot, confederate, supporter and savior.” It so happens that St. John, who only of the Evangelists, lays a peculiar stress upon the all-sufficiency of love, had an opportunity of becoming thoroughly indoctrinated in Platonism, by his long residence among the Greeks at Ephesus. Men have always had a mental constitution similar to our own. The rudest savages have the same affections and passions which actuate citizens of en

* See Mackay's Progress of the Intellect.

lightened nations. In all ages women have been found to love their children ; friends have been ready to aid each other at great cost to themselves ; soldiers have been willing to sacrifice themselves for their country. The disposition to act kindly and justly to others is born with all men, and he, who claims originality for expressing it, is a shameless impostor. Long before Christ, philosophers had taught that men should give to others the treatment they desired for themselves. Confucius in China, Isocrates in Greece, and Hillel in Judea expressed the sentiment in almost the very words, used by Jesus in later years. The doctrines of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, in regard to the conduct of men toward each other, will suffer little by a comparison with the teachings of Jesus. Herder says that the morality of the ancient Brahmins was pure and elevated. Sir Wm. Jones has expressed his admiration of the spirit of the Institutes of Menu ; and Dr. Arnold speaks in high praise of the greatness of soul, exhibited by the Stoics. No chastity can ever surpass that of Lucretia ; no honesty that of Aristides ; Washington's disinterestedness was not purer than that of Timoleon ; and on a comparison of the conduct of Socrates and Jesus, during trial and execution, the latter can certainly claim no preëminence. And yet we are asked to believe that Christ was the author of the teaching—"Do to others as you would have them do to you." The demand is preposterous. It would be equivalent to asking us to believe that in the ages before Christ, and in the lands where his teachings are unknown, there was and is no honesty, no truth, no friendship, no peace, no human society ; that all men were then and there liars, thieves, and murderers ; that, in fact, man is entirely wanting in the knowledge of what is right, or the disposition to do it, or both, until he has heard and believed the words of Jesus. The influence of the priestly lies in regard to the originality of Christ's teaching of the all-sufficiency of love, is so great that many, knowing their falsity, dare not declare it. The Rev. Mr. Milne, in the preface to his translation of the Chinese "Sacred Edict," expresses a fear that he shall be condemned for furnishing proof that before Jesus was born, a morality as pure as his was inculcated in the Celestial Empire. Milman is one of the few Christian an-

thors who have had the manliness and honesty to acknowledge that the New Testament morality was not new.

Sir Wm. Jones, knowing well the presumptuous assertion that the gospel of love, as taught by Jesus, was original with him, and knowing, also the falsity of the assertion, gave the propagandists of Christianity in Hindostan some good advice : " If the conversion of the Pundits and Maulavis, in this country, shall ever be attempted by the Protestant missionaries, they must beware of asserting, while they teach the gospel of truth, what those Pundits and Maulavis know to be false [the originality of the Christian morality] : the former would cite the beautiful Arya couplet, which was written, at least, three centuries before our era, and which pronounces the duty of a good man, even in the moment of his destruction, to consist, not only in forgiving, but even in the desire of benefiting his destroyer, as the sandal tree, in the instant of its overthrow, sheds perfume on the axe which fells it ; and the latter would triumph in repeating the verse of Sadi, who represents a return of good for good as a slight reciprocity, but says to the virtuous man ' Confer benefits on him who has injured thee ' : using an Arabic sentence, and a maxim apparently of the ancient Arabs. Nor would the Mussulmans fail to recite four distiches of Hafiz, who has illustrated that maxim with fanciful, but elegant allusions :

' Learn from yon orient shell, to love thy foe,
And store with pearls the hand which brings thee woe ;
Free, like yon rock, from base, vindictive pride,
Imblaze with gems the wrist that tears thy side :
Mark where yon tree rewards the stony shower,
With fruit nectarious or the balmy flower ;
All nature calls aloud ; ' Shall man do less
Than heal the smiter, and the railer bless ? ' " *

I cannot find that Jesus prohibited polygamy. He certainly did not prohibit it in express terms : neither is it plain to me that he forbade it by necessary implication. But, if he had done so, he would not have been original. Law and custom, before his time, prohibited polygamy among the Greeks, Romans, and Germans. Neither was Christianity the first religion under which women obtained a high degree of personal freedom. The Egyptian women were remarka-

* Eleventh Discourse before the Asiatic Society. 1794.

bly free for ancient times—quite as free as in most of the countries of modern Europe ; while, at a much later date, the Jewish women were complete slaves—so far as the law could make them such. “The old Roman matron* was, relatively to her husband, morally as high as in modern Italy ; nor is there any ground for supposing that modern women have any advantage over the ancient in Spain and Portugal, where Germanic have been counteracted by Moorish influences. The relative position of the sexes in Homeric Greece exhibits nothing materially different from the present day. In Armenia and Syria, perhaps, Christianity has done the service of extinguishing polygamy ; this is credible, though nowise miraculous : Judaism also unlearned polygamy, and made an unbidden improvement upon Moses. In short, only in countries where Germanic sentiment has taken root, do we see marks of any elevation of the female sex superior to that of Pagan antiquity ; and as this elevation of the German woman in her deepest Paganism was already striking to Tacitus and his contemporaries, it is highly unreasonable to claim it as an achievement of Christianity.”

But Jesus himself laid claim to no originality, in his moral doctrines. On the contrary, he declares (*Mat. XXII. 35–40*) that all the law and the prophets hang on two commandments given by Moses, which are to love God with the whole heart (*Deut. VI. 5*), and to “love thy neighbor as thyself” (*Lev. XIX. 18*). How can Christians assert that these two commandments do not comprise the whole law, after the express declaration of Jesus that they do? And if they do comprise the whole law, how can the moral teachings of Jesus be original? In his work on the *Origin of Christianity*, Hennell has shown conclusively that many of the sayings of Jesus were repetitions or paraphrases of other sayings to be found in the Old Testament, or current among the Jews before his birth.

The same changes which have occurred in the doctrines of the Christian Church, are many of them prefigured in events among the heathen, thousands of years ago. The change of opinion, similar to that now in progress in regard

* F. W. NEWMAN, *Phases of Faith*.

to the plenary inspiration of the prophetic writings, took place in Greece, before Christianity was thought of. "When superstitious people", says Neander, "thought that the God himself inhabited the priestess of the Delphic oracle, and spoke through her mouth, so that everything literally came from Phœbus himself, and when, on the contrary, the infidels tried to turn this representation into ridicule, and quoting the bad verses of the Pythian prophetess, laughed at the notion of this coming from Apollo, Plutarch thus replied—'The language, the expression, the words, and the metre, come not from God but from the woman. The God only presents the image to her mind, and lights up in her soul the lamp which illumines the future. The God uses the soul as an instrument, and the activity of the instrument consists in the property of representing, as purely as possible, what is communicated to it. It is impossible that it should be repeated perfectly pure,—nay, without even a large admixture of foreign matter.'"

From the theory of partial inspiration, the Greeks and Romans went over to entire unbelief in the old religion, and Æschylus in Athens and Livy in Rome lamented over the skepticism of the age, the destruction in popular belief of that religion which was the only foundation of morality. And the "infidels" of those days sometimes surrendered at the eleventh hour, and made the *amende honorable* to the divinities of superstition, as do the skeptics of our own age. The Eleusinian mysteries held a position in pagan Athens, similar to that held in modern Europe by Christianity. The great majority of the initiated asserted that acquaintance with, and belief in, the mysterious doctrines of Eleusis (the single nature, spiritual essence, and infinite mercy of the Deity, the immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments) had contributed greatly to their happiness in life. Many of the Athenians, who during long lives, had disbelieved and ridiculed the mysteries, at the near approach of death, became anxious for admission, and were terrified at the idea of dying without the mercenary blessing of the priest.* Diogenes refused to apply for admission, and spoke of the mysteries nearly as a philosopher of to-day might speak of the Christian Church. The Cynic said no church organiza-

* BARTHELEMY. Anacharsis. Ch. LXVIII.

tion could give him any valuable aid in performing his duties : and he remarked that many thieves and murderers had been admitted to the mysteries, while Epaminondas and other good men had not. The Chinese philosophers when about to die, sometimes seek absolution from the Boodhists, whom they had always before neglected and despised. *

APPENDIX. .

APPENDIX.

THIS Appendix is designed to contain authorities, and illustrations which could not be conveniently inserted in the text ; and also, in some cases, additional matter, which was overlooked or mislaid until too late to insert in the chapters.

The reader will please observe that the use of brackets [] throughout denotes the insertion by me of something additional in matter quoted.

I have used the phrases " a historical " and " a historian," intentionally violating the generally received rule which requires " an " before words beginning with *h*, and accented on some other than the first syllable.

Notes to the Preface.

Goethe makes Faust declare that those who have opened their hearts to the world have ever been crucified and burned.

" The mind which has outgrown the idea of a partial God is expected to retract, and to submit to vulgar opinion, under pain of that reproach of atheism which, though never incurred by barbarians, is an objection commonly urged against philosophy by those intellectual barbarians, who cling like children to the god whom they suppose to feed them, speak to them, and flatter them."—*R. W. Mackay*.

" Reformers in all ages, whatever their object, have been unpitied martyrs ; and the multitude have evinced a savage exultation in their sacrifice. Let in the light upon a nest of young owls, and they cry out against the injury you have done them. Men of mediocrity are young owls ; when you present them with strong brilliant ideas, they exclaim against them as false, dangerous, and deserving punishment."—*Adventures of a Younger Son*.

" An original thinker, a reformer in moral science, will thus often appear a hard and insensible character. He goes beyond the feelings and associations of the age ; he leaves them behind him ; he shocks our old prejudices ; it is reserved for a subsequent generation to whom his views have been unfolded from infancy, and in whose minds all the interesting associations have collected round them, which formerly encircled the exploded opinions, to regard his dis-

coveries with unmingled pleasure."—*Samuel Bailey, Essay on the Formation of Opinions.*

"The artist [the philosopher], it is true, is the son of his time; but pity for him, if he is its pupil, or even its favorite! Let some beneficent divinity snatch him when he a suckling from the breast of his mother, and nurse him with the milk of a better time, that he may ripen to his full stature, beneath a distant Grecian sky. And having grown to manhood, let him return like a foreign shape to his century: not, however, to delight it by his presence, but dreadful, like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it."—*Schiller—Translation by Carlyle.*

"To ask for nothing but results, to decline the labor of verification, to be satisfied with a ready-made stock of established positive arguments as proof, and to decry the doubter or negative reasoner, who starts new difficulties, as a common enemy.—this is a proceeding sufficiently common in ancient as well as in modern times. But it is nevertheless an abnegation of the dignity and even of the functions of speculative philosophy."—*Grote—History of Greece.*

"Ecclesiolatriy or Bibliolatriy is the modern heathenism, which, having supplanted the ancient, has for ages imitated the old craft of slandering as Atheists or Infidels all who aspire to a higher or purer worship."—*F. W. Newman.*

"The impiety [frequently charged to freethinkers] is with those who have insidiously perverted the truth; and not with those who seek with honest reverence to purify its desecrated shrine."—*Revelation its own Nemesis.*

"There is an unbelief worse than the public scoffing."

"The supposition that Christianity is a thing of the past—that it has done its work, in clearing the way during an age of darkness and barbarism, for the working of a more enlightened principle called "Progress" is a more popular view, and one which is tacitly and insensibly held by great numbers."—*London Literary Gazette. Oct. 4th 1856.*

"No doubt Jannes and Jambres exclaimed with a pious horror, 'What! give up the garlic and the cats which our fathers prayed to, and swore by! We shall never be guilty of that infidelity!' But the priesthood of garlic came to an end, and the world still continued."—*Parker.*

"To an American, accustomed to the simplicity of our modes of worship, the most prominent feature in European lands, save in the glorious fast-anchored isle,—and even there to great extent,—is, that in spite of the most imposing externals, the whole is little more than heartless formality—a wretched substitute for the bread of life."—*Prof. Hitchcock.*

"A want of real vitality and earnestness, in our religious community, has been felt and proclaimed to be the great want of the age."—*Pearson*.

"On all sides I found religion, but seldom religiousness; fear of God, but seldom love of God; good intention, but seldom good deed; professed Christians, but seldom followers of Christ. Not without reason, are a thousand voices raised to heaven in complaint over the decline of Christianity in our days. They complain for good cause. On one side, I see only indifference, ridicule, pride, and selfish effort to counteract the warning voice of conscience with cunning excuses: on the other side, I see youths and men and graybeards trembling in fearful doubts as to the fate of their souls, in this world, and beyond the grave."—*Zschokke. Stunden der Andacht*.

"I believe they [Voltaire and the French philosophers of the XVIIIth century] have done more than even Luther or Calvin, to lower the tone of that proud hierarchy that shot itself up above the clouds, and more to propagate religious liberty, than Calvin or Luther, or even Locke."—*John Adams*.

"Frederick [the Great] nevertheless, together with Voltaire and D'Alembert, stands in the foremost rank of those who fought for reason and civilization, and who conquered forever liberty of conscience and of speech."—*Bartholomew. History of the Prussian Academy*.

Domain of Reason in Religion.—Ch. I.

§ 1. In speaking of "the little literary ability, which has come to light on this continent" (page 3), I mean only, that it is little in proportion to the number, wealth and intelligence of the people; but it is not discreditably small, when the position of the Americans in a new country, where peculiar inducements attract the ambitious into "politics" or trade, and where the government prostitutes herself to book-pirates, is considered.

The Apostles Denounced Reason.

"Avoid oppositions of science, falsely so called, which some professing have erred from the faith."—1 Tim. VI. 20.

"The things of the Spirit of God are foolishness unto the natural man."—1 Cor. II. 14.

"'Believe or be damned', is the ever persuasive refrain of our benignant 'glad tidings to all mankind.'"—*Revelation its own Nemesis*.

Jesus is represented as "anxious to have men believe, without caring on what ground they believed."—*F. W. Newman*

The Catholic Church Denounces Reason.

"We forbid all lay persons to discuss matters of faith, under pain of excommunication."—*Decretal of Pope Alexander IV*

"Faith is not a mere conviction in reason : it is a firm assent it is a clear certainty, greater than any other certainty : and this is wrought in the mind by the grace of God, and by it alone."—*J. H. Newman.*

The Pope publishes every year an *Index Expurgatorius*, or list of works which the members of the church are forbidden to read. The forbidden books are usually such as have a skeptical tendency.

In 1624, at the request of the University of Paris, and especially of the Sorbonne, persons were forbidden by an *arrêt* of Parliament, under pain of death, to hold or to teach any maxim contrary to ancient and approved authors, or to enter into any debate, but such as should be approved by the doctors of the faculty of theology.

"Human reason is feeble and may be deceived but true faith cannot be deceived."—*Thomas A Kempis.*

"If your religion be false, you risk nothing in believing it true : if it be true, you risk all in believing it false."—*Pascal.*

"It is necessary that there should be an authority, against which nobody shall have the right to argue."—*J. de Maistre.*

"The principles of theology are above nature and reason."—*Pascal.*

The Protestants hostile to Free Inquiry.

"Divine things, since they are beyond reason, appear contrary to reason."—*Luther.*

"There is nothing more hostile to faith than reason."—*Luther.*

"Reason is the bride of the devil."—*Luther.*

"Build not your faith in the Divine Word on the sand of human reason."—*Calvin.*

"It is folly to think of God according to the dictates of our mad, dazzled, and corrupt reason."—*Luther.*

"In theology we balance authorities, in philosophy we weigh reasons."—*Kepler.*

"It behoves us to make an entire and unconditional surrender of our minds to all the duty and to all the information which the Bible sets before us."—*Chalmers.*

Dr. Arnold said that whenever doubts arose in his mind in re-

gard to dogmas of the established church his method was "to pause in his inquiries" and "to put down objections by main force."

"The mere presentation of the evidences of Christianity to many minds is fraught with danger."—*Christian Remembrancer*, (*Christian Quarterly*. London) Jan., 1857.

"When any thing, written in the Bible, is too hard for examination, it is our duty to captivate our understandings to the words, and not to labor in sifting out a philosophical truth by logic, of such mysteries as are not comprehensible, nor fall under any rule of natural science, for it is with the mysteries of our religion as with the wholesome pills for the sick, which swallowed whole, have the virtue to cure, but chewed, are for the most part cast up again without effect."—*Hobbes*.

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."—*Protestant Poetry*.

"Reason is the most unreasonable of all things."—*Henry Martyn*.

"People, who are born to orthodoxy, imbibe the opinions of their country or party, and never question their truth, are applauded for presuming that they are right. He that considers or examines is a foe to orthodoxy—is suspected of lukewarmness to suppose examination necessary, and of a tendency to apostacy, if he goes about it."—*Locke*.

The following extract from Sleeman may give an idea of the domain of reason in the religion of Hindostan :

"The popular Hindoo poem of *Ramaen* describes the abduction of the heroine by the monster king of Ceylon, Rawan, and her recovery by means of the monkey general Hunnooman. Every word of this poem, the people assured us, was written, if not by the hand of the deity himself, at least by his inspiration. Ninety-nine out of a hundred among the Hindoos implicitly believe not only every word of the poem, but every word of every poem that has ever been written in Sanscrit [the sacred language of Hindostan]. If you ask a man whether he really believes any very egregious absurdity, quoted from these books, he replies with the greatest *naivete* [simplicity] in the world, 'Is it not written in the book? and how shall it be there written, if not true?' The Hindoo religion reposes on an entire prostration of mind—that continual and habitual surrender of the reasoning faculties which we are accustomed to make occasionally while we are at the theatre or in the perusal of works of fiction. * * * With the Hindoos, the greater the improbability, the more monstrous and preposterous the fiction—the greater is the charm it has over their minds; and the greater their learning in the Sanscrit—the more they are under the influence of this charm. Believing all to be written by the deity or under his inspi-

ration, and the men and things in former days to have been different from the men and things of the present day, and the heroes of these fables to have been demi-gods or people endowed with powers far superior to those of the ordinary men of their own day, the analogies of nature are never for a moment considered; nor do questions of probability or possibility according to those analogies ever obtrude to dispel the charm with which they are so pleasingly bound. They go on through life, reading and talking of their monstrous fictions, which shock the taste and understanding of other nations, without ever questioning the truth of one single incident or hearing it questioned."

"History for this people [the Hindoos] is all a fairy tale."—*Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official, by Col. Sleeman.*

Some Christians have dared to demur against the great opposition to free inquiry, but not one, to my knowledge, has ever dared to advise his hearers or readers to examine what has been written against Christianity. They dare not do that!

"We need not desire a better evidence that any man is in the wrong than to hear him declare against reason, and thereby acknowledge that reason is against him."—*Archbishop Tillotson.*

"What I most crave to see, and what still appears no impossible dream, is inquiry and belief going together."—*Dr. Arnold.*

"I shudder at the consequences of fixing the great proofs of religion upon any other basis than that of the widest investigation, and the most honest statement of facts."—*Rev. Sydney Smith.*

"With regard to Christianity itself, I creep toward the light, even though it takes me away from the more nourishing warmth. Yea, I should do so, even if the light made its way through a rent in the wall of the temple."—*S. T. Coleridge.*

"Let her [truth] and falsehood grapple! 'Who ever know truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?'—*Milton.*

"There is a general obligation common to all Christians, of searching into the origin and evidences of our religion."—*Dr. Middleton.*

"One who has an aversion to doubt, and is anxious to make up his mind, and come to some conclusion on every question that is discussed, must be content to rest many of his opinions on very slight grounds. Such a one, therefore, is no lover of truth, or in the right way to attain it in any point. He may more reasonably hope this, who, though he may on many points perceive some (and perhaps a great) preponderance of probability on this or that side, is contented to come to a decisive conclusion, only on the few which he has been enabled thoroughly to investigate. * * A good

man, indeed, will wish to find the evidence of the Christian religion satisfactory : but a wise man will not for that reason find it satisfactory, but will weigh the evidence the more carefully, on account of the importance of the question."—*Whately*.

Philosophers on Reason in Religion.

"O, my dear Kepler, how I wish we could have one hearty laugh together! Here at Padua, is the principal professor of Philosophy, whom I have repeatedly and urgently requested to look at the moon and planets, through my glass, which he pertinaciously refuses to do. Why are you not here? What shouts of laughter we should have at this glorious folly."—*Galileo*.

"To steal into heaven, by the modern method of sticking, ostrich-like, your head into fallacies on earth, equally as by the ancient and by all conceivable methods, is forever forbidden."—*Carlyle's Life of Sterling*.

"Whenever obsequious reverence is substituted for bold inquiry, truth, if she is not already at hand, will never be attained."—*Hallam*.

"True faith is a belief in things probable."—*Mackay*.

"He who cannot reason, is a ~~stupid~~; he who will not, is a bigot; and he who dare not, is a slave."—*Drummond*.

"Belief consists in accepting the affirmations of the soul: unbelief, in denying them."—*Emerson*.

"How far is it proper to deceive mankind?"—*Voltaire*.

"The character of the philosophy of the middle age is submission to authority other than that of reason. Modern philosophy recognizes no other authority than that of reason. It is Cartesianism which has accomplished this decisive revolution."—*Cousin—Translated by O. W. Wight*.

"Socrates was free reflection; Descartes is free reflection elevated to the height of the most severe method. Descartes commences by doubting everything, the existence of God, that of the world, even his own existence; he only stops at that which he cannot doubt without ceasing even to doubt—at that which doubts within—at thought. Between the reflection of Socrates and the method of Descartes there is an interval of two thousand years. As the Greek dialectics are much more sincere, serious, and profound than those of India, so the method of Descartes is as much superior to the processes of the antique spirit, as our civilization is superior to that of Greece."—*The same*.

"Reason must be our last judge and guide in everything. I do not mean that we must consult reason, and examine whether a pro-

position revealed from God, can be made out by natural principles, and if it cannot, that we may then reject it : but consult it we must, and by it examine whether it be a revelation from God or no."—*Locke on the Understanding, IV. 19.*

"Divest yourself of all bias in favor of novelty and singularity of opinion. Indulge them in any other subject rather than that of religion. It is too important, and the consequences of error may be too serious. On the one hand, shake off all fears and servile prejudices, under which weak minds are servilely crouched. Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of a God ; because if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason than that of blindfolded fear. You will naturally examine first the religion of your own country. Read the Bible then as you would read Livy or Tacitus. The facts which are within the ordinary course of nature you will believe on the authority of the writer, as you would do those of the same kind in Livy or Tacitus. The testimony of the writer weighs in their favor, in one scale, and their not being against the laws of nature, does not weigh against them in the other. But those facts of the Bible which contradict the laws of nature must be examined with more care, and under a variety of phases. Here you must recur to the pretensions of the writer to inspiration from God. Examine upon what evidence his pretensions are founded, and whether that evidence is so strong, that its falsehood would be more improbable than a change in the laws of nature, in the case he relates. For example, in the book of Joshua we are told the sun stood still several hours. Were we to read that fact in Livy or Tacitus, we should class it with their showers of blood, speaking of statues, beasts, &c. But it is said the writer of that book was inspired. Examine, therefore, candidly what evidence there is of his having been inspired. The pretension is entitled to your inquiry because millions believe it. On the other hand, you are astronomer enough to know how contrary it is to the laws of nature, that a body revolving on its axis, as the earth does, should have stopped [suddenly], should not by that sudden stoppage have prostrated animals, trees, buildings, and should after a certain time have resumed its revolutions, and that also without a general prostration. Is this arrest of the earth's motion, or the evidence which affirms it, most within the laws of probability ? You will next read the New Testament. It is the history of a personage called Jesus. Keep in your eye the opposite pretensions ; *first*, of those who say he was begotten by God, born of a virgin, suspended and reversed the laws of nature at will, and ascended bodily into heaven ; and *secondly*, of those who say he was a man of illegitimate birth, of a benevolent heart, enthusiastic mind, who set out without pretensions, ended in believing them, and was punished capitally for sedition, by being

gibbeted according to the Roman law. * * * Do not be frightened from this inquiry by any fear of its consequences. * * * In fine, I repeat, you must lay aside all prejudices on both sides, and neither believe nor reject anything, because any other persons or description of persons have rejected or believed it. Your own reason is the only oracle given you by heaven, and you are answerable, not for the rightness, but the uprightness of your decisions."—*Thomas Jefferson—Letter to Peter Carr, Aug. 10, 1787.*

"Those who have not thoroughly examined to the bottom their own tenets, must confess they are unfit to prescribe to others : and are unreasonable in imposing that as truth on other men's belief, which they themselves have not searched into, nor weighed the arguments of probability, on which they should receive or reject it."—*Locke.*

"Whoso would be a man, must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms, must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore, if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world."—*Emerson.*

"Better is the faith that springeth from thy heart, Than a better faith belonging to a stranger."—*Alger. Oriental Poetry.*

"The new man must feel that he is new, and has not come into the world mortgaged to the opinions and usages of Europe, Asia, and Africa."—*Emerson.*

"He who does not like living in the furnished lodgings of tradition, must build his own house, his own system of thought and faith for himself."—*Zschokke.*

"Truth courts the light."—*Parker.*

"So long as our belief in religion is merely a matter of memory, of rote and of blind reception, so long can we have no firmness, no truth, no rest, no blessing in the highest sphere of our capacity."—*Zschokke.*

"To side with truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just:
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they once denied,
For humanity sweeps onward : where to-day the martyr stands
On the morrow crouches Judas, with the silver in his hands ;
For in front the cross stands ready, and the cracking fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn."

(Quoted in *Parker's Sermon on The True Idea of a Christian Church.*)

"As much freedom as you shut out, so much falsehood do you shut in."—*Parker*.

"When the discovery and profession of truth is attended with danger, the prudent are silent, the multitude believe and impostors triumph."—*Mosheim*.

"There are two sets of learned men. One candidly seeks truth by natural means, and is always willing to have his opinions and principles examined by the test of reason. Another, who learn by rote a set of opinions and a way of thinking, and who betray themselves by their anger and surprise, whenever those principles are questioned or canvassed."

"There are few of the great truths now recognized which have not been treated as chimerical and blasphemous before they were demonstrated."—*Agassiz*.

"These ancient preoccupations of our minds, these several and almost sacred opinions, are to be examined, if we will make way for truth, and put our minds in that freedom which belongs and is necessary to them. A mistake is not the less so, and will never grow into a truth, because we have believed it for a long time though perhaps it be the harder to part with : and an error is not the less dangerous, nor the less contrary to truth because it is cried up and had in veneration by any party."—*Locke*.

"The investigation of all subjects comprehensible and scrutable to the human faculties, is the undoubted privilege of a rational understanding."—*J. C. Prichard*.

"Reason and truth are the only hope of mankind. It is through them alone that any essential improvement in the condition of men—of individuals and of nations—is to be wrought out. Weak instruments they may be, often overborne and silenced by the discordant clamor of men's passions and prejudices and folly, by selfishness and sin :—but there are no other. It is by reason that truth is discovered, and through reason that it is addressed to our hearts. By what other influence should they be controlled? By what other influence should our permanent affections be formed? Certainly neither by false doctrines, nor by unsubstantial imaginations, nor by the blind, disorderly working of natural impulses good and bad. Intellectual truth is the essential constituent of moral goodness. Whoever acts with the purpose of serving his fellow men, does so from a recognition of the truth of certain propositions which arise in his feelings, and find confirmation in his reason."—*Norton*.

Religion a valuable political institution.

§ 2. "Among all the useful institutions that demonstrate the superior excellence of the Roman government the most considerable

perhaps, is the opinions which people are taught to hold concerning the gods ; and that which other men regard as a disgrace, appears, in my judgment, to be the very thing by which this republic is sustained. I mean superstition, which is impressed, with all its terrors, and influences the private actions of the citizens and the public administration of the state, to a degree that can scarcely be exceeded. The ancients, therefore, acted not absurdly, nor without good reason, when they inculcated the notions concerning the gods, and the *belief of infernal punishment* ; but much rather are those of the present age to be charged with rashness and absurdity in endeavoring to extirpate these opinions ; for not to mention other effects that flow from such an institution, if among the Greeks, for example, a single talent only be entrusted to those who have the management of any of the public money, though they give ten written sureties, with as many seals and twice as many witnesses, they are unable to discharge with integrity the trust reposed in them. But the Romans, on the other hand, who in the course of their magistracies and in embassies disburse the greatest sums, are prevailed on by the simple obligation of an oath to perform their duty with inviolable honesty. And as in other states, a man is rarely to be found whose hands are pure from public robbery, so among the Romans it is no less rare to discover one that is tainted with this crime.”—*Hampton's Polybius, Vol. II. Book. VI.*

“ Philosophers unite in regarding truth as inseparably allied with human happiness, and error as essentially hostile to it. It was otherwise with the sages of antiquity, amongst whom there was a prevalent dissociation of the utility from the truth of a doctrine. It was supposed that a dogma might be advantageous and even necessary to society and to political institutions, although it were false, and that it ought in this case to be strenuously supported and shielded from scrutiny even by those who were aware of its character.”—*Samuel Bailey—Pursuit of Truth.*

“ It seems to have been the settled conviction of most of those [living about the beginning of the Christian era] who had the sincerest desire of attaining truth themselves, that to the mass of mankind, truth was in many points inexpedient and unfit to be communicated ; that, however desirable it might be for the leading personages in the world to be instructed in the true nature of things, there were many popular delusions which were essential to the well-being of society.”—*Whately—Essay on the Writings of St. Paul.*

The Dishonesty of Priests.

§ 2. “ Every church establishment is a mighty joint-stock company of error and deception, which invites subscriptions to the common fund, from the largest amounts of hypocrisy to the lowest penny and farthing contribution of acquiescence in what conscience does not entirely approve.”—*Blanco White.*

The English church, "the child of regal and aristocratical selfishness and unprincipled tyranny, she has never dared to speak boldly to the great, but has contented herself with lecturing the poor."—*Dr. Arnold.*

"The whole body of the clergy in every established church may be divided into three classes ;—those who heartily believe the doctrines of their creed : the smallest number, I suspect, by far :—those who by repeated efforts, and by carefully limiting their inquiries, have succeeded in silencing their own doubts, and in persuading themselves that these doctrines admit of a plausible defense ;—and in the last place, a very considerable number, indeed, and perhaps the most injurious to the interests of religion, who give their solemn assent to doctrines which they do not believe."—*Norton.*

SPEECH OF RED JACKET AGAINST THE MISSIONARIES.—"These men know we do not understand their religion. We cannot read their book : they tell us different stories about what it contains, and we believe they make the book talk to suit themselves. If we had no money, no land, and no country to be cheated out of, these black-coats would not trouble themselves about our good hereafter. The Great Spirit will not punish us for what we do not know. He will do justice to his red children. These black-coats talk to the Great Spirit and ask for light, that we may see as they do, when they are blind themselves, and quarrel about the light which guides them. These things we do not understand, and the light they give us makes the straight and plain path, trod by our fathers, dark and dreary. The black-coats tell us to work and raise corn ; they do nothing themselves, and would starve to death if somebody did not feed them. All they do is pray to the Great Spirit : but that will not make corn or potatoes grow : if it will, why do they beg from us, and from the white people ? The red men knew nothing of trouble until it came from the white men : as soon as they crossed the great waters, they wanted our country, and in return they have always been ready to teach us how to quarrel about their religion. Red Jacket can never be the friend of such men."—*History of the Indian Tribes of North America, by T. L. McKenny and James Hall.*

"To worship the urine of cows, which the Parsees and Hindoos drink, that they may obtain forgiveness of sins, is not more ludicrous than to worship the comb, or a shred of the garment, of the mother of God."—*Feuerbach. Essence of Christianity.*

"When I heard the bell toll to call people together in the steeple-house, it struck at my life, for it was like a market-bell to gather people together, that the priest might set forth his wares for sale. Oh ! the vast sums of money that are got by the trade they make of selling the Scriptures, and by their preaching, from the

highest bishop down to the lowest priest. What one trade in the world is comparable to it? Notwithstanding the Scriptures were given forth freely, Christ commanded his ministers to preach freely, and the prophets and apostles denounced judgment against all covetous hirelings and divines for money.”—*George Fox*.

DESCRIPTION OF A FASHIONABLE PRIEST.—“A bishop among us is generally supposed to be a stately and pompous person, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day; somewhat obsequious to persons in power, and somewhat haughty and imperative to those who are beneath him: with more authority in his tone and manner, than solidity in his learning: and yet with much more learning than charity or humility; very fond of being called my lord, and driving about in a coach with mitres in the panels, but little addicted to visiting the sick and fatherless, or earning for himself the blessing of those who are ready to perish,

—————‘Familiar with a round
Of ladyships—a stranger to the poor’—————

decorous in his manners, but no foe to luxurions indulgences: rigid in maintaining discipline among his immediate dependents, and in exacting the homage due to his dignity from the undignified mob of his brethren, but perfectly willing to leave to them the undivided privileges of comforting and of teaching their people, and of soothing the sins and sorrows of their erring flocks; scornful, if not openly hostile, upon all occasions, to the claims of the people, from whom he is generally sprung, and presuming everything in favor of the royal will and prerogative, by which he has been exalted; setting indeed, in all cases, a much higher value on the privileges of the few, than the rights that are common to all, and exerting himself strenuously that the former may ever prevail; caring more accordingly for the interests of his order, than the general good of the church, and far more for the church than the religion it was established to teach; hating dissenters still more bitterly than infidels; but combating both rather with obloquy and invocation of civil penalties, than with the artillery of a powerful reason, or the reconciling influences of an humble and holy life; uttering now and then haughty professions of humility, and regularly bewailing at fit seasons, the severity of those Episcopal labors, which sadden and even threaten to abridge a life, which to all other eyes appears to flow on in almost unbroken leisure and continuous indulgences.”—*Edinburgh Review*, Dec., 1828.

“The French clergy does not live now [1828] as in times past but shows a regularity of conduct worthy of the apostles. Happy effect of poverty!—Happy fruit of the persecution suffered in the grand epoch when God visited his church. It is not one of the least blessings of the revolution, that not only the cures, always

respectable, but even the bishops are moral men."—*Courier*. Quoted in the *Edinburgh Review*, March, 1829.

What is Christianity ?—Ch. II.

§ 7. Butler says the real question in studying the truth of the Bible is not "whether it be a book of such sort, and so promulged, as weak men are apt to fancy a book containing a divine revelation should."—*Analogy of Religion*, Part II., Ch. III.

"There are no degrees in infallibility."—*Coleridge*.

"How can infallible truth be conveyed in defective and fallible expressions."—*Same*.

Parker says the believers in a supernatural revelation imagine it to be "an afterthought of God interpolated in human affairs."

Perversions of the meaning of the Bible.

§ 8. The plain meaning of the Bible is perverted greatly by the Christian priests in many cases, but I shall refer here only to two points—Public Prayer and the Observance of Sunday.

PUBLIC PRAYER. Every one knows that public prayers are offered in every Christian church every Sunday, and in a great many other places on other occasions. And yet, praying in public is expressly forbidden by Jesus.

"When thou prayest thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. * * But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret." *Jesus in Mat. VI. 5, 6.*

"When he [Jesus] had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray." *Mat. XIV. 23.*

"And they [Jesus and his Apostles] came to a place which was named Gethsemane, and he saith unto his disciples 'Sit ye here while I shall pray.'" *Mark XIV. 32.*

"And again he [Jesus] went away and prayed." *Mark XIV. 39.*

"And he [Jesus] withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed." *Luke I. 16.*

OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAY. Neither Jesus nor his disciples commanded the observance of Sunday as a sacred day. Under the dispensation of Paul, the Sabbath (that is the Jewish Sabbath, for it is a perversion of language to apply the word "Sabbath" to Sunday) was abrogated, with all the other ceremonial observances of the Mosaic law—

"One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth

every day alike. Let every man be persuaded in his own mind." *Rom. XIV. 5.*

"Let no man judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of a holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath." *Col. II. 16.* Paul here means to tell his converts that it is nobody's business how much pork they eat, or how many Jewish festival days they disregard, or how much they labor on the Sabbath.

The First Council in Jerusalem, writing to the Churches of Paul, said "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you, no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well" (*Acts XV, 28, 29*).

This Council was called expressly to consider how far the Gentile converts should observe the Mosaic law; and their opinion is expressed in the verses quoted. All the observances, commanded in the law of Moses and not there expressed, were declared unnecessary.

"We deem it wicked to fast on the Sunday or to pray on our knees."—*Tertullian.*

"The "Manicheans were damned for fasting on the Lord's day."—*St. Ambrose.*

The *Daily News* (of London,) a year or more since, published the following list of extracts—

1. St. Chrysostom, whose prayer is read every Sunday in all [Episcopal] churches, says—"After the congregation is dismissed, every man may apply himself to his lawful business."—*Hom. v. on Matt. i.*

2. St. Athanasius says—"We keep no Sabbaths as the ancients did, except an eternal Sabbath, which shall have no end."—See *Heylin de Sabb., p. 183.*

3. Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian, speaking of the Patriarchs, says "They cared not for corporal circumcision—no more do we; nor for the observation of Sabbaths—no more do we."—*Ecl. Hist. p. 7.*

4. St. Augustin says—"He that literally keeps the Sabbath savors of the flesh; but to savor of the flesh is death."—*De. Spir. et. Lit. c. xiv.*

5. Calvin says—"by changing the day and yet attributing to this day when changed the same sanctity which the Jews did to their Sabbaths, we retain the same typical distinction of days as had place among the Jews. Those who now cling to them go thrice as far as the Jews themselves in their gross and carnal superstition of their Sabbath worship."—*Inst. viii. 34.*

6. Beza says—"On the Lord's day no cessation of work is

required ; that would be not to abolish Judaism, but merely to put it off to another day."—*Or. the Apoc. i. 10.*

7. Archbishop Cranmer required of the clergy to teach the people that they would grievously offend God if they abstained from working on Sundays in harvest time.—*See Cranmer's Visitation Articles.*

8. Jeremy Taylor says "the Lord's day did not succeed in the place of the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was abrogated. The Lord's day was merely an ecclesiastical institution."

9. Paley says—"Cessation upon Sunday from labor beyond the time of attendance upon public worship is not intimated in any passage of the New Testament, nor did Christ or His apostles deliver any command to their disciples for the discontinuance upon that day of the common offices of their professions." Again : "The resting on that day from our employments, longer than we are detained from them by attendance upon public worship, is to Christians an ordinance of human institution."—*Mor. Ph., v. 7.*

10. Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, says "The Lord's day is to be held purely as a religious festival. Judaism being abolished, all its ritual observances must, of course, be wholly at an end ; so that we are no more compelled to keep the fourth commandment than we are to keep the worship of the temple, or the daily sacrifice." *Essays on the writings of St. Paul.*

11. Dr. Arnold says "That Sunday should be a day of greater leisure than other days, and of the suspension, as far as may be, of the common business of life, I quite allow ; but, then, I should have much greater indulgence for recreation on a Sunday than you might have ; and if the railway enables the people in the great towns to get out into the country on a Sunday, I should think it is a very great good."—*Dr. Arnold's Life, vol. ii. p. 210.*

12. Luther says—"If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day's sake—if anywhere any one sets up his observance upon a Jewish foundation—then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that reproves this encroachment on the Christian spirit and liberty." *See Coleridge's Table Talk, vol. ii. p. 316.*

Character of Jehovah.—Ch. III.

§ 11. "The feelings, Fear, Reverence, Devotion, Love, naturally personify God—humanize the Deity, and represent the Infinite under the limitations of a finite and imperfect being, whom we 'can know all about.' He has the thoughts, feelings, passions, limitations of a man ; is subject to time and space ; sees, remembers, has a form. This is 'Anthropomorphism.'"—*Parker.*

Jehovah is a Biped.

§ 12. "And he [Gideon] said unto him [Jehovah] 'If now I

footmen, and thou hast said 'I will give them flesh that they may eat a whole month.' Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them?' And the Lord said unto Moses 'Is the Lord's hand waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.'" *Num. XI. 21-23.*

Moses advised Jehovah not to give way to his fit of passion against the Jews, because if he should, "The Egyptians will hear it," and will say Jehovah "was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them." *Num. XIV. 11-20.*

"And Joshua said 'Alas! O, Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other side Jordan.'" *Josh. VII. 7.*

"And the Lord said unto Samnel * * 'fill thy horn with oil and go.' * * And Samnel said 'How can I go? If Saul hear it he will kill me.'" *I. S. XVI. 1, 2.*

"It displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry" that Jehovah did not destroy Nineveh, after compelling Jophah to prophesy its destruction; and he prayed "Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." *Jonah IV. 1, 3.*

When Jehovah ordered Ananias to go and baptise Saul, he replied "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he hath authority to bind all who call on thy name." Ananias wished to be excused from that duty, supposing that Jehovah was ignorant of the danger or too careless of the comfort of his worshippers. *Acts. IX. 11-16.*

When Jehovah appeared in a vision to Peter and ordered him to eat all kinds of unclean animals, Peter replied "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." *Acts, X. 9-16.*

"While the orthodox church preserved a just medium between excessive veneration and improper contempt for the law of Moses, the various heretics deviated into equal but opposite extremes of error and extravagance. From the acknowledged truth of the Jewish religion, the Ebionites had concluded that it could never be abolished. From its supposed imperfections the Gnostics as hastily inferred that it never was instituted by the wisdom of the Deity. There are some objections, against the authority of Moses and the prophets, which too readily present themselves to the skeptical mind; though they can only be derived from our ignorance of remote antiquity and from our incapacity to form an adequate judgment of the Divine economy. These objections were eagerly embraced and as petulantly urged by the vain science of the Gnostics. As those heretics were, for the most part, averse to the

pleasures of sense, they morosely arraigned the polygamy of the patriarchs, the gallantries of David and the scraglio of Solomon. The conquest of the land of Canaan and the extirpation of the unsuspecting natives, they were at a loss how to reconcile to the common notions of humanity and justice. But when they recollected the sanguinary list of murders, of executions, and of massacres, which stain almost every page of the Jewish annals, they acknowledged that the barbarians of Palestine had exercised as much compassion towards their idolatrous enemies, as they had ever shown to their friends or countrymen. Passing from the sectaries of the law to the law itself, they asserted that it was impossible that a religion which consisted only of bloody sacrifices and trifling ceremonies, and whose rewards, as well as punishments, were all of a carnal and temporal nature, could inspire the love of virtue or restrain the impetuosity of passion. The Mosaic account of the creation and fall of man was treated with profane derision by the Gnostics, who would not listen with patience to the repose of the Deity after six days labor, to the rib of Adam, the garden of Eden, the trees of life and knowledge, the speaking serpent, the forbidden fruit and the condemnation pronounced against human kind for the venial offense of their first progenitors. The God of Israel was impiously represented by the Gnostics as a being liable to passion and to error, capricious in his favor, implacable in his resentment, meanly jealous of his superstitious worship, and confining his partial providence to a single people and to this transitory life. In such a character they could discover none of the features of the wise and Omnipotent Father of the universe." *Gibbon, Decline and Fall, Ch. XV.*

Soliloquy of Jehovah.

"From an eternity of idleness
 I, God, awoke : in seven days toil made earth
 From nothing ; rested, and created man :
 I placed him in a paradise, and there
 Planted the tree of evil, so that he
 Might eat and perish, and my soul procure
 Wherewith to sate its malice, and so turn,
 Even like a heartless conqueror of the earth
 All misery to my fame. The race of men
 Chosen to my honor, with impunity
 May sate the lusts I planted in their hearts.
 I will beget a son, and he shall bear
 The sins of all the world : he shall arise
 In an unnoticed corner of the earth,
 And there shall die upon a cross, and purge
 The universal crime ; so that the few

On whom my grace descends, those who are marked
 As vessels to the honor of their God.
 May credit this strange sacrifice, and save
 Their souls alive : millions shall live and die,
 Who ne'er shall call upon their Savior's name,
 But, unredeemed, go to the gaping grave.
 Thousands shall deem it an old woman's tale,
 Such as the nurses frighten babes withal :
 There in a gulf of anguish and of flame
 Shall curse their reprobation endlessly,
 Yet tenfold pangs shall force them to avow
 Even on their beds of torment where they howl,
 My honor and the justice of their doom."

Shelley. Queen Mab.

Character of Jesus—Ch. IV.

Opinions of Philosophers on the Character of Jesus.

§ 19. " Whatever be the spirit with which the four Gospels be approached, it is impossible to rise from the attentive perusal of them without a strong reverence for Jesus Christ. Even the disposition to cavil and ridicule is forced to retire before the majestic simplicity of the Prophet of Nazareth. Unlike Moses or Mahomet he owes no part of the lustre which surrounds him to his acquisition of temporal power: his is the ascendancy which mankind, in proportion to their mental advancement, are least disposed to resist—that of moral and intellectual greatness. The virtues, wisdom, and sufferings of Jesus, will secure to him a powerful influence over men so long as they continue to be moral, intellectual and sympathising beings. And as the tendency of human improvements is towards the progressive increase of these qualities, it may be presumed that the empire of Christianity, considered simply as the influence of the life, character and doctrine of Christ over the human mind, will never cease."—*Hennell—Origin of Christianity*

Goethe says The Spirit of God is nowhere more beautifully revealed than in the New Testament.

The celebrated Hindoo Freethinker and Reformer, Rammohun Roy, wrote, " After long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth, I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles, and better adapted for the use of rational beings, than any others which have come to my knowledge."

Carlyle styles Jesus a divine man.

" Abstracting what is really his, from the rubbish in which it is buried, easily distinguished by its lustre from the dross of his biographers, and as separable from that as the diamond from the dunghill, we have the outlines of a system of the most sublime mor-

ality, which has ever fallen from the lips of man."—*Thomas Jefferson—Letter to Mr. Short, Oct. 31, 1819.*

"I think Christ's system of morals and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is likely to see; but I apprehend that they have received various corrupting changes."—*Benjamin Franklin—Spark's Biography, p. 515*

"I confess to you that the holiness of the Gospel is an argument which speaks to my heart, and to which I should regret to find a refutation. Look at the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp, how small are they in comparison? Can it be that a book, at once so simple and so sublime, can be the work of man? Can it be that he, whose history is there written, was but a man? Are these the words of a fanatic or of an ambitious partizan? What sweetness, what purity of manners! What touching grace in his discourses! What nobleness in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his words! What presence of mind, perspicacity, and justice in his replies! What command over his passions! Where is the man, the sage who can live, suffer, and die without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato described his imaginary just man, covered with all the disgrace of crime, and worthy of all the rewards of virtue, he painted Jesus Christ, feature for feature; the likeness is so striking that all the Fathers of the church perceived it, and it was impossible to mistake it. How prejudiced, how blind must not he be, who would dare to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the Son of Mary. How little resemblance between them! Socrates, dying without pain, without ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if this easy death had not honored his life, we should doubt whether Socrates, with all his genius, was more than a sophist. He invented, it is said, moral law; but others before him had practiced morality; he said no more than others had done; he only reduced to precepts previous examples. Aristides had been just before Socrates defined justice; Leonidas died for his country before Socrates taught the duty of love of country; Spartans were self-denying before Socrates inculcated sobriety; before he defined virtue, Greece had abounded in virtuous men. But whence from among the Jews did Jesus derive that elevated pure morality, of which he alone gave the example and the precept? In the midst of the most furious fanaticism, was heard the sublimest wisdom, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues honored the vilest of all people. The death of Socrates, philosophising among his friends, was the mildest possible; that of Jesus, by a horrible torture, abused, derided, cursed by the whole people, was the most fearful that could be imagined. Socrates, taking the prisoner's cup from the weeping officer, pardons him; in the midst of his frightful sufferings Christ blesses his executioner. Yes, the life and death of Socrates were

those of a sage ; but the life and death of Jesus were those of a God."—*Rousseau, Emile*

Voltaire says, "He must have been a sage since he declaimed against priestly impostors and superstitions ; but the sayings and doings imputed to him, were not always those of a wise man."

Mendelssohn considered Jesus as a generous enthusiast.

"Nothing that is here said, can imply even the most distant disrespect to the moral character of Jesus Christ. He was a virtuous and amiable man. The morality that he preached and practised, was of the most benevolent kind : and though similar systems of morality had been preached by Confucius, and by some of the Greek Philosophers many years before, by the Quakers since, and by many good men in all ages, it has not been exceeded by any."—*Thomas Paine. Age of Reason.*

"A man [Jesus] is born in the world,—a real man—such a one as it has never seen : he lives a life consistently the very highest : his wisdom is the calm earnest voice of humanity : to the worldly and common-place so exasperating, as forcing upon them their own worthlessness,—to the good so admirable that every other faculty is absorbed in wonder."—*J. A. Froude. Nemesis of Faith.*

"If ever man was God, and God was man, Jesus Christ was both."—*Byron.*

"Alone in all history, he [Jesus] estimated the true greatness of man. The idioms of his language and the figures of his rhetoric, have usurped the place of his truth : and churches are built, not on his principles, but on his tropes."—*Emerson.*

"We hold that God has so arranged matters in this beautiful and well-ordered, but mysteriously governed universe, that one great mind, after another, will arise from time to time, as such are needed, to discover and flash forth, before the eyes of men, the truths that are wanted, and the amount of truth that can be borne. We conceive that this is effected by endowing them,—or by having arranged that nature and the course of events shall send them into the world endowed—with that superior mental and moral organization, in which grand truths, sublime gleams of spiritual light will spontaneously and inevitably arise. Such a one, we believe, was Jesus of Nazareth,—the most exalted religious genius whom God ever sent upon the earth : in himself an embodied revelation : humanity in its divinest phase—God manifested in the flesh : according to Eastern hyperbole : an exemplar vouchsafed in an early age of the world, of what man may and should become in the course of ages, in his reverence towards the realization of his destiny : an individual gifted with a glorious intellect, a noble soul, a fine r-

ganization, and a perfectly-balanced moral being : and who by virtue of these endowments, saw further than other men

“ Beyond the verge of that blue sky
Where God's sublimest secrets lie : ”

an earnest, not only of what humanity may be, but of what it will be, when the most perfected races, shall bear the same relation to the finest minds of existing times, as these now bear to the Bushmen or the Esquimaux.”—*Greg. Creed of Christendom.*

Philosophers on the Spirit of the New Testament.

“ The Christian religion raises the dim perception of divine existence, which is apparently born with, and natural to all men, to the simplest and most enlightened ideas of the Deity—to ideas the most worthy of the Godhead and the most elevating to mankind ; purifies the mind from all superstitions of the agency of demons and wizards, and creates in every human soul, wherein it prevails an overflowing fountain of unbounded confidence in God, of love for all good, of all-embracing humanity, of exhaustless fortitude in adversity, of temperance and humility in prosperity, of patience in suffering, of peace of heart, of content with the present, and of never-dying hope for a better future. The faith of Jesus was a pure theosophy in the simplest sense of the word.”—*Wieland—Vernunft in Glaubenssachen. Section XXVII.*

“ The Gospel of Christ is one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, of benevolence, and of universal charity.” *Bolingbroke Fragments of Essays, XX.*

Jeremy Bentham says the Religion of Jesus has a “ benevolent system of morals.” *Introduction to “ Not Paul but Jesus.”*

“ Even supposing it to have been purely a human invention, it has been the most amiable and the most useful invention that was ever imposed on mankind for their good.” *Bolingbroke.*

“ I value the religion of Jesus not as being absolute and perfect truth, but as containing more truth, purer truth, stronger truth than has ever yet been given to man.” *Greg.*

“ The Bible is pervaded by a sentiment which is implied everywhere—viz., the infinite sympathy of the Pure and Perfect God with the heart of each faithful worshipper. This is that which is wanting in Greek philosophers, English Deists, German Pantheists, and all formalists. This is that which so often edifies me in Christian writers and speakers, when I ever so much disbelieve the letter of their sentences. Accordingly, though I saw more and more of moral and spiritual imperfections in the Bible, I by no means ceased to regard it as a quarry whence I might dig precious metal though the ore needed a refining analysis ; and I regarded this

as the truest essence and most vital point in Christianity—to sympathize with the great souls from whom its spiritual eminence has flowed; to love, to hope, to rejoice, to trust with them.” *F. W. Newman.*

“A system of noble theism and lofty morality as Christ delivered it.” *Greg.*

“Whatever errors may have crept in among the simple, yet sublime views, published by Christ, the practical moral character of his Gospel has always stood prominently above the abstract doctrines.” *Blanco White.*

“There is no book which I love and esteem so much as the New Testament, with the devotional parts of the Old. There is none which I know so intimately, the very words of which dwell close to me, in my most sacred thoughts, none for which I so thank God, none on which my soul and heart have been to so great an extent moulded. In my early boyhood, it was my private delight and daily companion: and to it I owe the best part of whatever wisdom there is in my manhood. Yet, after more than thirty years’ study of it, I deliberately before God and man protest against the attempt to make it a law to man’s understanding, conscience, or soul: and am assuredly convinced that the deepest spiritual mischief has occurred to the churches,—nothing short of a stifling of the Spirit of God (with few intervals) for seventeen centuries and a half, from taking the Bible (or New Testament), instead of God himself, as our source of inspiration.”—*F. W. Newman—The Soul.*

Christian Authors on Jesus.

“Sweep away the perfection we see actualized in him, and there is no point in the world’s history on which we could fix our gaze as by any possibility becoming the starting point of the higher life—no other realization of divine perfection in humanity—no other example of the Word becoming flesh and dwelling with us.”—*Movell.*

“There is not in the character of Christ one trait of mortality: nothing which for an instant bespeaks him allied to the infirmities of man; no change, no guile, no conflict of passion, no wavering of heart, no pride of spirit; without thought for himself, without love of command, a man of sorrow, rejected and despised; who bore in his bosom the rebuke of many people, and moved silently on in the paths of affliction; healing and comforting mankind; and laying the foundations of that blessed religion, the voice of which has gone out into all lands, and called man from the alternate slumber and fury of his savage life to the sweets and glories of industry and peace.”—*Sydney Smith.*

“The character of Christ is a part of the morality of the Gospel: one strong observation upon which is, that, neither as re-

presented by his followers, nor as attacked by his enemies, is he charged with any personal vice. * * * Some stain pollutes the morals, or the morality, of almost every other teacher, and of every other lawgiver. Zeno the Stoic, and Diogenes, fell into the foulest impurities : of which also Socrates himself was more than suspected. Solon forbade unnatural crimes to slaves. Lucurgus tolerated theft as a part of education. Plato recommended a community of women. Aristotle maintained the general right of making war upon barbarians. The elder Cato was remarkable for the ill-usage of his slaves : the younger gave up the person of his wife. One loose principle is found in almost all the pagan moralists—is distinctly, however, perceived in the writings of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus—and that is the allowing, and even the recommending to their disciples, a compliance with the religion, and with the religious rites, of every country into which they came. In speaking of the founders of new institutions, we cannot forget Mahomet. His licentious transgressions of his own licentious rules,—his abuse of the character which he assumed, and of the power which he had acquired, for the purposes of personal and privileged indulgence—his avowed claim of a special permission from heaven of unlimited sensuality, is known to every reader, as it is confessed by every writer, of the modern story.”—*Paley. Evidences of Christianity, Ch. II.*

“In the Bible, there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books together : the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being : and whatever finds me, brings with it irresistible evidence of having proceeded from the Holy Spirit.”—*Coleridge.*

Improper Conduct of Jesus.

§ 22. Jesus accepted an invitation to an entertainment at the house of a Pharisee (*Luke, XI, 37*). He had scarcely taken his seat before he broke out in vulgar abuse of the host and his friends. He called them “fools,” and “hypocrites,” said they were full “of ravening and wickedness” and threatened them with “woe,” and charged them with being guilty of all the innocent blood which had been shed from the time of Abel, to the time of Zacharias. “We grant” says Strauss “that Attic urbanity is not to be expected in a Jewish teacher, but even according to the oriental standard, such invectives uttered at table against the host and his guests, would be the grossest dereliction of what is due to hospitality.”

“Why asketh thou me? Ask them, which heard me, what I have said unto them : behold, they know what I have said?” Such a reply on such an occasion, might be accepted without surprise, as the half-petulant, half-sulky evasion of outraged humanity : but would not the sublime simplicity of divine truthfulness—would not

human magnanimity, when about to offer itself up for the very cause in question, have eagerly and earnestly accepted the occasion, fully, freely and fearlessly to have proclaimed that truth, on behalf of which it was actually waiting a voluntary and long preconcerted sacrifice." *Revelation its own Nemesis.*

The author of *Revelation its own Nemesis* says that Socrates on the occasion of his trial and execution showed a "magnanimity more than godlike, if Revelation be the standard."

Jesus executed for Sedition.

Suetonius and Dio Cassius (Book IV.) say that the Romans were in the habit, when a person was executed for crime of signifying by a placard what the offense was. If the assumption of the title "King of the Jews" was the offense of Jesus, he must have been executed for sedition.

"That a Roman Judge and Governor, while proclaiming 'I find no fault in him,' should yet, at the very moment, stultify himself, and degrade the Imperial office, in deference to party clamor, by sacrificing a prisoner, whom himself had openly, and unreservedly acquitted seems altogether incredible: and if a crucifixion at all took place, the text itself would warrant the conjecture, that it was the execution of a political demagogue, whose popular agitation might, as the Jews apprehended, provoke 'the Romans to come and take away their nation.' 'It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' 'We have no king, but Cesar.' 'If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend.'" *Revelation its own Nemesis.*

Character of Paul.—Ch. V.

§ 29. It is distinctly stated by both Josephus (*Ant. XI. 5*), and Philo (*De Virtut*), that there were many thousands of Jews in Babylon in their time.

"The first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were all circumcised Jews; and the congregation over which they presided united the law of Moses with the doctrine of Christ."—*Gibbon, XV.*

"All they [the Christian churches] which are in Asia, be turned away from me" (*Paul in 2 Tim. II. 15*). There is a modest declaration: all the apostles and disciples of Jesus have become heretics by turning away from *him*, though their doctrines remained the same as they were while Jesus taught and while Saul persecuted them. The Epistle to *Timothy* was written about 66 A. D., according to the chronology received by the church.

"Scarcely had Paul left Galatia, when enemies of his teaching appeared there, and persuaded the Galatian Christians to be circumcised and observe all the ritual of Moses (*Gal. I. 6; IV. 18*). These enemies of the Apostle were not Galatian Jews, for they had

not disturbed him in either his first or his second visit to that place, but had left his converts for a number of years (from 53 to 57 A. D.), to adopt the new doctrine without trouble. Besides these enemies were not strict Jews, but Jewish Christians (*I.* 7; *V.* 10); for they did not oppose Christianity, as strict Jews would have done; they taught only the necessity of connecting Judaism with Christianity. The circumstances show that these enemies must have been missionaries sent out by the Jewish Christians of Palestine to counteract the anti-Mosaic doctrines of Paul. They exalted John, Peter, and James; they asserted that Paul was no apostle, because he had not been a disciple of Jesus; that it was his duty to obey the other apostles, and to teach as they taught; that he had departed from their teaching merely for the sake of applause; and that he permitted the Gentiles to disregard the Mosaic law for the purpose of gaining them as his partizans. They opposed Paul on precisely the same grounds afterwards taken by other missionaries who appeared at Corinth, and sought to draw away his converts (*2 Cor.* *III.* 1; *XI.* 4, 5; *XII.* 11, 12).—*Eichhorn—Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, § 212.

“The destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple made many of the Palestinian Christians become unsteady in their rigorous Judaism, because they believed that these events must be solemn signs given by God of the abrogation of the Mosaic dispensation. But they did not join the Pauline Christians until the political revolutions of Palestine made it a matter of prudence for them to abandon Judaism. The separation did not take place until the reign of Hadrian, when a persecution was commenced against the unruly Jews, and it became a matter of importance to the Christians in Palestine to separate themselves from the persecuted class, and thus protect themselves from the hostility of the Romans, and obtain permission to settle peaceably in the town of *Ælia*, built upon the site of Jerusalem. But some of the zealous Jewish Christians refused to abandon the rites of their fathers, and these were called Nazarenes [or Ebionites].”—*Eichhorn—Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, § 4.

“Not long after the death of Christ, his followers became gradually divided into two parties. First, there were the Jewish Christians: that was the oldest portion, the old school of Christians. They are mentioned in ecclesiastical history as the Ebionites, Nazarenes, and under yet other names. Peter and James were the great men in that division of the early Christians. Matthew and the author of the “Gospel according to the Hebrews” [not our Epistle to the Hebrews], were their evangelists. The church at Jerusalem was their stronghold. They kept the whole Hebrew law,—all its burthensome ritual, its circumcision and its sacrifices, its new-moon days, and its full-moon days, sabbaths, fasts and

feasts. The first fifteen bishops of the church at Jerusalem were circumcised Jews."—*Parker*.

Sins of the Apostles.

"He [Jesus] gave them [the twelve apostles] power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease" *Mat. X. 1*.

"He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.'" *John. XX. 20*.

Two of the apostles of Jesus desired to destroy a village with fire from heaven, because the villagers would not believe their doctrine. *Luke. IX. 54*.

Peter rebuked Jesus. *Mat. XVI. 22*.

When Peter was asked, after the arrest of Jesus, whether he was a follower of the latter, he *cursed* and *swore*, saying, "I know not the man", and on three separate occasions denied his master. *Mat. XXVI. 74*.

Peter cut off Malchus' ear. *Mat. XXVI. 51*.

Peter said Paul was a heretic, and Paul said Peter was a liar and a hypocrite. *Gal. II. 11-14*.

Paul damned Alexander, the coppersmith, with polite phrase: he "did me much *evil*"; the Lord reward him according to his *works*." *1 Tim. I. 20*; *2 Tim. IV. 14*. Paul wished to see his friends saved according to their *faith*, and his enemies damned according to their *works*.

Paul cursed those who preached a doctrine different from his own. *Gal. I. 8, 9*.

The apostles disputed, after Christ's predictions of his death, as to who should be the greatest in the coming kingdom. *Mat. XX. 24*; *Mark. IX. 35*; *Luke. XXII. 25*.

They went so far as to ask for seats at the right hand and at the left. *Mat. XIX. 28, XX. 21*; *Mark. X. 37*; *Luke. XXII. 30*.

They fled when Jesus was arrested. *Mat. XXIV. 36*.

Jesus was buried by a stranger. *Mark XV. 43*.

Character of David.—Ch. VI.

§ 29. I have nothing about David to insert here, but some of the sins of Solomon and other inspired prophets are almost too important to be altogether omitted, and yet did not appear important enough to deserve a separate chapter.

Character of Solomon.

"In the declining age of David, his eldest surviving son, Adonijah, endeavored to place himself on the throne, by the aid of Joab the chief captain, and Abiathar one of the chief priests, both of whom had been associated with David's early sufferings under Saul. The aged monarch did not for a moment give way to

the formidable usurpation, but at the remonstrance of his favorite. Bathsheba, resolved forthwith to raise Solomon to the throne. To Joab he was able to oppose the celebrated name of Benaiah; to Abiathar his colleague Zadok, and the aged prophet Nathan. The plot of Adonijah was at once defeated by this decisive measure and Solomon, being anointed by Nathan, was solemnly acknowledged as king.

“The death of David would seem to have followed very quickly upon these transactions. At least, no public measures in the interval are recorded, except Solomon’s verbal forgiveness of Adonijah. But after the removal of David, the first events of which we hear are the destruction of Adonijah, Joab and Shimei the son of Gera, with the degradation of Abiathar. Those who look for Christian perfection in the conduct of Solomon do some violence to the facts, in order to explain these transactions; which are in themselves clear enough. Despotic monarchs are seldom found to forgive unsuccessful competitors for the crown or their assistants; and their first deed is not rarely to put to death their innocent brothers (2 Ch. XXI. 4). The promise of Solomon to Adonijah, almost as much as his command to Shimei (I. K. II. 37) was but a deferring of vengeance to a more convenient time; and the same absolute power which could interpret into treason the humble suit for the hand of a beautiful but obscure damsel, would have been sure to find, sooner or later, a plausible excuse for effecting the object determined on. In fact Abiathar is declared worthy of death, not for any new offense, but for his participation in Adonijah’s original attempt; and Joab is put to death solely because he is alarmed at the treatment of his associates. For the wicked Joab no pity need be felt; yet the complexion of the whole affair proves that his murder of two chief captains, was rather a convenient excuse than the true ground of his death. As for Shimei, the tyrannical restriction on his innocent liberty, by which a pretense for his death was found, is far less respectable than simple violence; and almost makes David’s public forgiveness of him (2 S. XVI. 9—12) and solemn oath (XIX. 21—23,) appear like an ostentatious catching at popularity which concealed implacable resentment. It is remarkable that these three executions are all perpetrated by the hand of Benaiah himself, who was head of David’s body guard, and after Joab’s death, chief captain of the army. * *

“For the harem of Solomon—consisting of 700 wives and 300 concubines—no other apology can be made than the fact that in countries where polygamy is not disreputable, an unlimited indulgence as to the number of wives, is looked upon as the chief luxury of wealth, and the most appropriate appendage of royalty. Permission once being given, and the taste established, nothing but poverty can set a limit, since an establishment of one hundred or a thousand wives, is perhaps more harmonious than one of two or three. * *

"The proceeding of Solomon towards the religion of his wives has been mildly or approvingly regarded by various learned men, as being only what we have learned to name - Toleration." But such a view of the case seems to imply a want of discrimination between those times and our own; and besides would require us to suppose the statements in the history to be exaggerated, as though they were highly improbable. The religions of antiquity being essentially ceremonial were of a most obtrusive kind. It is one thing to allow men in private to hold their conscientious sentiments, or, indeed, by argument or discussion to aim at propagating them, and quite another to sanction public idolatries which appeal to and allure the senses of the ignorant, and scandalize the minds of the better taught; to say nothing of the impurities and cruelties with which these idolatries were almost always connected. The spirituality and individuality of religion were not as yet so developed as to allow of our ascribing Solomon's conduct to right and noble views of toleration. Besides he was under no necessity to marry these foreign wives at all. Unless prompted by mere voluptuousness (as in the case of the concubines), he must have taken them from mere political motives, although distinctly knowing that the step would draw after it his public establishment of heathen sin and superstition. This is widely different from allowing foreigners, who for trade resided in the country, to practice their own religious ceremonies at their own prompting and expense; and yet, even this, if permitted at all, would have been permitted only within walled and separated streets, by a king anxious to obey the law of Moses and Jehovah, in ever so liberal and unconfined a spirit. * *

"The picture of Solomon, here drawn, is far less favorable than could be wished; yet an endeavor has been made to keep close to the facts. Undoubtedly, the book of *Chronicles*—which (contrary to custom), in this reign adds little or nothing to that of the *Kings*—by omission gives a seriously altered view of this celebrated man: for not only are his numerous marriages, his idolatries, his oppressions, his vexatious enemies, and the grave rebuke of the prophet, Ahijah—left out of the narrative entirely—but his building of an especial palace for his Egyptian queen is ascribed to his pious objection to her dwelling in the house of David, because of the Ark having passed through it (2 Ch. VIII. 11). From a mind of so sensitive scrupulosity, no one could have expected the establishment of heathenish worship. This very circumstance will show how tender was the feeling of the Levitical body [which composed the *Chronicles*] towards him, and how little likely it is, that the book of *Kings* has, in any way, given a discolored and unfair view of his lamentable worldliness of spirit."—*Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature—Article Solomon.*

Sins Committed by Prophets.

Jehovah promised to be with Aaron. *Ex. IV. 15.*

Aaron was appointed Jehovah's high priest forever. *Ex. XXVII. 21.*

Aaron was possessed of miraculous power. *Ex. IV. 28, 30*

Aaron rebelled against Moses. *Num. XII. 2.*

Aaron made the golden calf and worshipped it. *Ex. XXXII. 1-6.*

Elisha, a holy man of God, went to Bethel, "and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him 'Go up thou bald-head: go up, thou bald-head!' And he turned back and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them." *2 K. II. 23, 24.*

The prophet Zedekiah slapped the face of the prophet Micah, in the presence of King Jehoshaphat. *2 Ch. XVIII. 23.*

Jeremiah damned his luck. *Jer. XX. 14-18.*

Jeremiah lied.—*Jer. XXXVIII. 27.*

Isaiah "astonished the natives" of Jerusalem, by walking about that city naked and barefoot for three years, with the sackcloth from off his loins, probably exhibiting "substantial sternworks" as Carlyle says of Abbot Samson.—*L. XX. 2, 3.*

The Chosen People—Ch. VII.

§ 45. "How long will this people provoke me? And how long will it be, ere they believe me for all the signs which I have shown among them? (*Num. XIV. 11*). "It would be easy" says Gibbon, "but it would be unbecoming to justify the complaint of the Deity from the whole tenor of the Mosaic history."

All the miracles and rebellions recorded in the *Pentateuch*, as having occurred during the time of Moses, happened within the space of two years: for there is no record of the events of thirty-eight years. In the Chapter *XII.* of *Numbers* the Israelites were at Kadesh in the second year of the exodus, and in Chapter *XX* they are represented as being at the wilderness of Zin in the fortieth year.

Biblical Superstitions—Ch. VIII.

A Material Hell.

§ 48. "If men, in general, had ever seen a human being broiling in a real fire, writhing and groaning, men, in general, would fall on their knees to implore the quenching of hell-fire, or would disbelieve its existence.—*Leigh Hunt.*

The preaching of Hell, with amplification upon the joy which the saints in Heaven feel, in looking down upon the sinners in the flames, is going out of fashion. The church members are losing their faith in hell, and are beginning to hate the preachers who delight to roll it under their tongues as a sweet morsel. I had a quo-

tation from the *Christian Observer* advising the clergy to be cautious about using threats of damnation in their sermons, but unfortunately the quotation has been mislaid.

The whole theory and practice of "Divine Worship," is superstitious.

"If you do not burn any paper in honor of Fo, and if you do not deposit any offerings on his altar, he will be displeased you think, and send his judgments on your heads. What a miserable creature must your God Fo be then! Let us take the example of the magistrate of your district; should you never go to compliment him, and pay your court to him, if you are honest people, attentive to your duty, he will not the less be well disposed towards you; but if you transgress the law, commit violence, and encroach on the rights of others, he will always be dissatisfied with you, though you should find a thousand ways of flattering him."—*Chinese Philosopher, quoted in Huc's Journey through China. Chap. V.*

"If sighs and tears could purchase the Kingdom of Heaven, and a sad face expiate a wicked life, hardness of heart would, indeed, be weakness of understanding."—*Sydney Smith.*

"The Greek offers meat and wine to his God; the Negro spits his chewed victuals as an offering into the face of his idols: the Ostiak besmears his idols with blood and grease, and stuffs his nose full of snuff; and the Christians and Mohammedans think to appease their God by personal petitions and prayers."

Mosaic Cosmogony.—Ch. IX.

Date of Creation

§ 53. "I conclude therefore, that the original *fiat* of the Almighty, which called into being the heaven and the earth, was anterior to the first day, at what distance of time it were idle to conjecture."—*Chalmers.*

"No means are to be found for ascertaining the real age of the world" (*Prichard. Phys. Hist. Man. Note on Biblical Chronology.*). He thus denies the truth of the Scriptural chronology, and the genealogy of Jesus.

Formation of the Universe.

§ 54. "Every event in the universe takes place according to fixed laws."—*Hitchcock.*

"If the organic world be governed by law, we cannot believe that it commenced without law."—*Sedgwick.*

Descartes "makes God contribute nothing more to the fabric of the world, than the turning round of a vortex or whirlpool of matter: from the fortuitous motion of which, according to certain general laws of nature, must proceed all this frame of things that now is, the exact organization and successive generation of animals,

without the guidance of any mind or wisdom.”—*Cudworth* (1678). *Int. Sys. Ch. I.*

Prof. Nichol, who has published several works on the discoveries made with Lord Rosse's great telescope, adopts the theory of Laplace, not as certainly, but as probably, correct in its explanation of the manner in which the universe was formed.—See his *Architecture of Heavens, Solar System, etc.*

“The celebrated speculation of Laplace, now very generally received as probable by astronomers, concerning the origin of the earth and planets, participates essentially in the strictly inductive character of modern philosophical theory. * * * The known laws of matter authorize us to suppose, that a body, which is constantly giving out so large an amount of heat as the sun is, must be progressively cooling, and by that process of cooling, it must contract: if therefore we endeavor from the present state of that luminary, to infer its state in a time long past, we must necessarily suppose that it extended as far as we can trace those effects which it would naturally leave behind on retiring: and such the planets are. These suppositions being made, it follows from known laws that successive zones of the solar atmosphere would be abandoned: that these would continue to revolve round the sun with the same velocity as when they formed part of his substance: and that they would cool down long before the sun himself, to any given temperature, and consequently to that, the greater part of the vaporous matter, of which the rings consisted, would become liquid or solid. The known law of gravitation would then cause them to agglomerate in masses, which would assume the shape our planets actually exhibit: would acquire, each round its own axis, a rotary motion; and would in that state revolve, as the planets actually do, about the sun, in the same direction with the sun's rotation, but with less velocity, and each of them in the same periodic time which the sun's rotation occupied when his atmosphere extended to that point: and this also, M. Comte has, by the necessary calculations, ascertained to be true, within certain small limits of error. There is thus in Laplace's theory, nothing hypothetical: it is an example of legitimate reasoning from a present effect to its past cause, according to the known laws of that cause: it assumes nothing more than that objects, which really exist, obey the laws which are known to be obeyed by all terrestrial objects resembling them.”—*J. S. Mill. Logic.*

Origin of Life.

§ 55. “If there is a point in natural philosophy which may be regarded as finally settled, it is the imperishability of the chemical elements, and the everlasting duration of force.” *Draper.*

"The vital forces are only modifications of the ordinary forces of matter, acting under peculiar conditions."—*Humboldt*.

"The law of progress—unity evolving multiplicity of parts through successive individualizations, proceeding from the more fundamental onward—has been recognized among philosophers."—*J. D. Dana*.

"I have no sympathy with those who say, of this or that physiological problem, 'It is above our reason.' My faith in the power of reason is profound. Far from supposing that there are many things in the structure and functions of the body which we can never comprehend, I believe that there is nothing in it, we shall not at last explain."—*Draper*.

"In the organism of plants, the various compounds wanted by plants are fabricated. Animals destroy these compounds, and in so doing, maintain a high temperature, irrespective of atmospheric conditions, and give rise to the phenomena of motion and intellectuality."—*Draper*.

"The chief materials which a living being receives from the external world are, therefore, combustible matter, water, oxygen-gas; and out of the action of these upon one another, all the physical phenomena of its life arise."—*Draper*.

"The development of every organism, from a primordial cell to its final condition, however elevated that condition may be, is the inevitable consequence of the operation of a universal, invariable, and eternal law."—*Draper*.

Cartilage "in many animals forms the entire structure, and in the early state of the human embryo, it does the same."—*Carpenter*.

"All the forces which are operative in the material world are but different manifestations of the same force."—*Grove*.

"An animal, in this point of view, is an oxydizing machine, into the interior of which atmospheric air is constantly introduced. The active constituent, oxygen, satisfies its chemical affinities at the expense of those parts of the system which are wasting away; and as the act of breathing, that is, the introduction of this gas, takes place day and night, waking and sleeping, so, too, must the production of burned bodies—a part escaping by the lungs, a part by the skin, a part by the urine. To compensate the loss which ensues, nearly 1,000 pounds of combustible matter must be used in the course of a year."—*Draper*.

"It is a singular fact, which will yet lead to singular results, that Cuvier's arrangement of the four classes of vertebrate animals should exhibit the same order as that in which they are found in the strata of the earth. In the *fish* the average proportion of the brain to the spinal cord is only as 2 to 1. In the *reptile* the ratio is 2½

to 1. In the *bird* it is 3 to 1. In the *mammal* it is 4 to 1. And in man it is 23 to 1. No less remarkable is the foetal progress of the human brain. It first becomes a brain resembling that of a fish; then it grows into the form of that of a reptile; then into that of a bird; then into that of a mammiferous quadruped, and finally it assumes that of a man, thus comprising in its foetal progress an epitome of geological history, as if man were in himself a compendium of all animated nature, and of kin to every creature that lives."—*Agassiz*.

"Nothing can be more gratifying than to trace the close agreement of the general results, derived from the study of the structure of animals with the results derived from the investigation of their embryonic changes, or from their succession in geological times. Let anatomy be the foundation of a classification, and, in the main, the frame, thus divided, will agree with the arrangement introduced from embryological data. And, again, this series will express the chief features of the order of succession in which animals were gradually introduced upon our globe."—*Agassiz—Lake Superior*, p. 197.

"Nature has not formed man totally different from other animals, but rather added to his brain new organs. She has not in this case pulled down the fabric of sentient being and reconstructed it upon a totally different plan. All that she has done, has been to add to the original edifice Corinthian capitals and Doric columns; bestowing reason not to supersede, but to guide, direct, and perfect his animal nature. We may rest assured, therefore, that whatever principles, in the shape of instincts, are given to animals, for their preservation and protection, are also instincts in man; and that what in them is a propensity or a desire, is not in him anything else."—*Sydney Smith*.

"Grades of mind, like forms of matter, are mere stages of development."—*Vestiges of Creation*.

Prof. Roget on Development.

"We have seen that in each of the two great divisions or kingdoms of organic nature, the same general objects are aimed at, and the same general plans are devised for their accomplishment: and also that in the execution of these plans, similar means and agencies are employed. In each division there prevails a remarkable uniformity in the composition and properties of their elementary textures, in the nature of their vital powers, in the arrangement of their organs, and in the laws of their production and development. The same principle of analogy may be traced, amidst endless modifications of detail, in all the subordinate groups into which each kingdom admits of being subdivided, both in respect to the organization and functions of the objects comprehended in each assemblage; whether

we examine the wonders of their mechanical fabric, or study the series of processes by which nutrition, sensation, voluntary motion, and reproduction are effected. * * In constructing each of the divisions so established, Nature appears to have kept in view a certain definite type, or ideal standard, to which amidst innumerable modifications, rendered necessary by the varying circumstances and different destinations of each species, she always shows a decided tendency to conform. It would almost seem as if, in laying the foundation of each organized fabric, she had commenced by taking an exact copy of the primitive model : and in building the superstructure, had allowed herself to depart from the original plan only for the purpose of accommodation to certain specific and ulterior objects, conformable with the destination of that particular race of created beings. Such, indeed, is the hypothetical principle which, under the title of *Unity of Composition*, has been adopted and zealously pursued in all its consequences, by many naturalists of the highest eminence on the continent. As the facts on which this hypothesis is supported, and the views which it unfolds are highly deserving of attention, I shall here briefly state them : but in so doing, I shall beg to premise the caution that these views should, for the present, be regarded as hypothetical and as by no means possessing the certainty of philosophical generalization.

"The hypothesis, in question, is countenanced in the first place by the supposed constancy with which, in all the animals belonging to the same natural group, we meet with the same constituent elements of structure, in each respective system of organs, notwithstanding the utmost diversity which may exist in the forms of the organs, and in the uses to which they are applied. This principle has been most strikingly exemplified in the osteology of vertebrated animals ; but its truth is also inferred from the examination of the mechanical fabric of insects, *Crustacea* and *Arachnida* ; and it appears to extend also to the structures subservient to other functions, and, particularly, those of the nervous system. Thus, Nature has provided for the locomotion of the serpent, not by the creation of new structures, foreign to the type of the vertebrata, but by employing the ribs in this new office ; and, in giving wings to the lizard, she has extended these same bones to serve as supports to the extended parts. In arming the elephant with tusks, she has merely caused two of the teeth in the upper jaw to be developed into these formidable weapons ; and, in providing it with an instrument of prehension, has only resorted to a greater elongation of the snout.

"The law of gradation, in conformity to which all the living, together with the extinct races of organic nature arrange themselves, more or less into certain regular series, is one of the consequences which have been deduced from the hypothesis we are considering. Every fresh copy taken of the original type, is supposed to receive a continual extension of its faculties and endowments, by the gradual

ted development of elements which existed in a latent form in the primeval germ, and which are evolved, in succession as Nature advances in her course. Thus, we find that each new form which arises, in following the ascending scale of creation, retains a strong affinity to that which had preceded it, and also tends to impress its own features on those which immediately succeed, and thus their specific differences result merely from the different extent and direction given to these organic developments: those of inferior races, proceeding to a certain point only, and there stopping, while in beings of a higher rank, they advance further, and lead to all the observed diversities of conformation and endowments.

“ It is remarked in further corroboration of these views that the animals which occupy the highest stations in each series possess, at the commencement of their existence, forms exhibiting a marked resemblance to those presented in the permanent condition of the lowest animals in the same series; and that, during the progress of their development they assume, in succession, the characters of each tribe, corresponding to their consecutive order in the ascending chain: so that the peculiarities which distinguish the higher animals, on its attaining its ultimate and permanent form, are those which it had received in its last stage of embryonic evolution. Another consequence of this hypothesis is that we may expect, occasionally, to meet in inferior animals, with rudimental organs, which from their imperfect development, may be of little or no use to the individual, but which become available to some superior species, in which they are sufficiently perfected. The following are the most remarkable facts in illustration of these propositions.

“ In the series of Articulated Animals, of which the *Annelida* (ring-animals) constitute the lowest, and winged insects the highest terms, we find that the larvæ of the latter are often, scarcely distinguishable, either in outward form or internal organization from *Vermes* (worms) of the lowest orders; both being equally destitute of, or but imperfectly provided with external instruments of locomotion; distinct vascular circulation, and multiple organs of digestion; and the central filaments of the nervous system in both being studded with numerous pairs of equidistant ganglia. In the worm all these features remain as permanent characters of the order; in the insect they are subsequently modified and altered during its progressive metamorphoses. The embryo of a crab resembles in appearance the permanent forms of the *Myriapoda* and the lower animals of its own class, but acquires in the progress of its growth new parts; while those, already evolved become more and more concentrated; passing in their progress, through all the forms of transition which characterize the intermediate tribes of the *Crustacea*, till the animal attains its last stage, and then exhibits the most developed condition of that particular type.

“ However different the conformations of the Fish, the Reptile,

the Bird, and the warm-blooded Quadruped, may be at the period of their maturity, they are not distinguishable from one another in their embryonic state : and their early development proceeds for some time in the same manner. They all possess at first the characters of aquatic animals : and the frog even retains this form for a considerable period after it has left the egg. The young tadpole is in truth a fish, whether we regard the form and action of its instruments of progressive motion, the arrangement of its organs of circulation and respiration, or the conditions of the central organs of its nervous system. We have seen by what gradual and curious transitions all these aquatic characters are changed for those of a terrestrial quadruped, furnished with limbs for moving on the ground, and with lungs for breathing atmospheric air : and how the plan of circulation is altered from branchial to pulmonary, in proportion as the gills wither and the lungs are developed. If while this change is going on, and while both sets of organs are together executing the function of aeration, all further development were prevented, we should have an amphibious animal, fitted for maintaining life both in air and in water. It is curious that this precise condition is the permanent state of the siren and the proteus ; animals which thus exemplify one of the forms of transition in the metamorphosis of the frog.

In the rudimental form of the feet of serpent, which are so imperfectly developed as to be concealed underneath the skin, and to be useless as organs of progressive motion, we have an example of the first stage of that process, which, when carried further in the higher animals, gives rise to the limbs of quadrupeds, and which it would almost seem as if Nature had instituted with a prospective view to these more improved constructions. Another and a still more remarkable instance of the same kind, occurs in the rudimental teeth of the young whale, which are concealed within the lower jaw, and which are afterwards removed to give place to the curious filtering apparatus which occupies the roof of the mouth, and which Nature has substituted for that of teeth : as if new objects superseding those at first pursued, had arisen in the progress of development.

- Birds, though destined to a very different sphere of action from either fishes or reptiles, are yet observed to pass in the embryonic stage of their existence, through forms of transition which successively resemble these inferior classes. The brain presents in its earliest formation, a series of tubercles placed longitudinally, like those of fishes, and only assuming its proper character at a later period. The respiratory organs are at first branchial, placed like those of the fish, in the neck, where there are also several branchial apertures similar to those of the lamprey and the smelt : and the heart and great vessels are constructed like those of the tadpole with reference to a branchial circulation. In their conversion

to the purposes of aerial respiration, they undergo a series of changes precisely analogous to those of the tadpole.

“Mammalia, during the early periods of their developement, are subjected to all the transformations which have been now described; commencing with an organization corresponding to those of the aquatic tribes exhibiting not only branchiæ, supported on branchial arches, but also branchiol apertures in the neck; and thence passing quickly to the conditions of structure adapted to a terrestrial existence. The development of various parts of the system, more especially of the brain, the ear, the mouth, and the extremities is carried still farther than in birds. Nor is the human embryo exempt from the same metamorphoses; possessing at one period, branchiæ and branchial apertures similar to those of the cartilaginous fishes, a heart with a single set of cavities, and a brain consisting of a longitudinal series of tubercles; next losing its branchiæ and acquiring lungs, while the circulation is yet single, and thus imitating the condition of the reptile; then acquiring a double circulation, but an incomplete diaphragm, like birds; afterwards appearing like a quadruped, with a caudal prolongation of the sacrum, and an intermaxillary bone; and lastly changing its structure to one adapted to the erect position accompanied by a great expansion of the cerebral hemispheres, which extend backwards so as completely to cover the cerebellum. Thus does the whole fabric arrive by a gradual process of mutation, at an extent of elaboration and refinement, which has been justly regarded as constituting a climax of organic development unattainable by any other race of terrestrial beings.” *Dr, Roget. Animal and Vegetable Physiology. Bridgewater Treatise*

Antiquity of the Human Race.

§ 50. Dr. Arnold, in private conversation with F. W. Newman, says the latter “treated all these questions [about the clashing of science with the Scriptural accounts of creation, the flood, etc.] as matters of indifference to religion; and did not hesitate to say that the account of Noah’s deluge was evidently mythical, and the history of Joseph a beautiful poem.”

It is now universally conceded among the learned that the human race has existed on the earth in great numbers for more than five thousand years—much longer than the Biblical chronology will admit us to believe.

There is in the Old Testament no connected chronology prior to Solomon.” *Bunsen—Egypt’s Place in Universal History.* Lepsius (*Chronologie der Ägypter*) says the same. Bunsen carries Egyptian history up to 3,300 B. C.: Lepsius to 3,893 B. C.

“The Egyptian Empire first presents itself to view about 4,000 years before Christ, as that of a mighty nation, in full tide of civili-

zation, and surrounded by other realms and races already emerging from the barbarous stage."—*Types of Mankind*. p. 57.

"The Egyptian monuments and records carry us to the beginning of the third millenium [2,000 years] before the birth of Christ; and the earliest glimpse we gain of the condition of mankind in this country, exhibits them as already far advanced in civilization, and bearing no marks of so recent an origin from a single family as even the Septuagint Chronology supposes." * * * *

"The consequence of the method which has been commonly adopted of making the Jewish Chronology the bed of Procrustes, to which every other must conform its length, has been that credence has been refused to histories, such as that of Egypt, resting upon unquestionable documents; and we have voluntarily deprived ourselves of at least a thousand years, which have been redeemed for us from the darkness of ante-historic times." * * *

"Without going beyond the history itself, it must appear incredible that a little more than four hundred years after the world was dispeopled by the flood, Abraham should have found a Pharaoh reigning over the monarchy of Egypt, and that the East, as far as its condition is disclosed to us, should present no trace of recent desolation, but is already occupied and divided into communities."—*Rev. John Kenrick—Ancient Egypt*.

"The negro, with all his peculiarities of form, color, and hair, appears just the same in the paintings [on the Egyptian monuments] of the age of Thothmes III, fifteen centuries before the Christian era, as he is now seen in the interior of Africa."—*Kenrick—Primitive History*.

Bunsen says the Egyptians practised writing 3,000 B. C.

"No historian who deals honestly and conscientiously with Egyptian Chronology, can evade these questions. We have no hesitation in asserting at once, without entering into any further investigation, that there exist Egyptian monuments, the date of which can be accurately fixed of a higher antiquity than those of any other nation known in history, viz., above 5,000 years [3,150 B. C.]. This fact must be explained; to deny it would be a proof of little skill and still less candor, on the part of any critic who has once undertaken to prosecute the inquiry."—*Bunsen*.

"If we examine, we shall find in Egypt works executed ten thousand years ago (I speak with proper caution and mean all that I say), which are neither better nor worse than those of this age."—*Plato*.

Manetho, a priest at Heliopolis, under the Egyptian hierarchy, in the year 304, B. C., wrote a history of Egypt, in which he gave a list of twenty royal dynasties, with the name of each monarch, and the duration of his reign, reaching back more than 5,000 years before

Jesus. The book of Manetho is lost, but his list of kings is preserved to us in quotations made by other authors. His history, beyond 1,500 B. C., was long supposed to be fabulous, simply because it clashed with the Mosaic Chronology; but the study of the monuments of Egypt, and the translation of the hieroglyphics, have confirmed his report of the names of the monarchs and the duration of their respective reigns up to 2,800 B. C., and no error has yet been shown beyond that time.

Lepsius, in his *Chronologie der Ägypter*, mentions an Egyptian papyrus, entitled *The Book of the Dead* (now in the Museum of Turin), which, in his opinion, was written 1,500 B. C. It describes the fate of a human soul after death, its trial before Osiris, etc.

The astronomical period known to the Egyptians as the Sothiac Cycle furnishes a strong presumption that the Egyptian nation existed at least 3,000 years before the time of Jesus. The Egyptian year was composed of 365 days precisely, and, therefore, their New Year's day fell back one day every four years, and in 1460 years had made its circuit through every day in the year. Sothis was the Egyptian name for the Dog-Star; and the Sothiac period extended from the time when the heliacal rising of that star corresponded with the first day of the month Sothis, and the first day of the year, until there was another such a correspondence—1,460 years. This Sothiac period, or Great Year was known in the reign of Ramses II. in the fourteenth century before Jesus, according to Lepsius. The discovery of this Great Year could scarcely have been made, before the national astronomers had once observed and recorded its completion, which would carry us back 2,700 B. C.

“It is evident to me, as it must be to all who have thoroughly examined Egypt, or have an accurate knowledge of the Egyptian monuments existing in Europe, that the arts commenced in Greece by a servile imitation of the arts of Egypt, much more advanced than is vulgarly believed, at the period at which the first Egyptian colonies came in contact with the savage inhabitants of Attica or the Peloponnesus. Without Egypt, Greece would probably never have become the classical land of the fine arts. Such is my entire belief on this great problem. I write these lines almost in the presence of bas-reliefs, which the Egyptians executed with the most elegant delicacy of workmanship 1,700 years before the Christian era.”—*Champollion jeune.*

The North China *Herald*, published at Shanghai, in its issue of Oct. 29, 1853, contained an able article on Chinese Chronology, by Dr. Macgowan, a learned man. He says in substance that the literature of China reaches back to the reign of Yaou, who lived 4,000 years ago, or 2,200 years before Jesus. The strongest evidences of the approximate correctness of their Chinese Chronology

are drawn from the Chinese astronomy. The group or Star Maou, one of the 28 constellations known to us under the name of Pleiades is said in the first chapter of the Shao-King to have been a criterion for the time of the winter Solstice. This means that the Star would appear in the South at sunset at that time of the year. The Pleiades are now distant a little more than a sign from the summer Solstice, or nearly 150 degrees from the winter Solstice. In order to account for the removal of 90 degrees from this latter point, an interval of 4,000 years must be allowed for the equinoctial points do not move more than a degree in 71 years.

While the pole of the ecliptic remains unmoved, the north pole, by the slow displacement of the earth's position, revolves round it on a circle whose radius is 23½ degrees. It happens that on this circle, about 60 degrees in advance of the present pole star, are two stars named respectively Tien-yih, and Tse-yih, the former being the more distant. These names mean the Heavenly One, and the Great One; and the names, being very ancient, suggests the idea that these stars were the successive pole stars of early observers.

The Chinese calendar Hia-Sia-mching, said by the Chinese writers to be a relic of the time of Yu (B. C. 2400), says that among the stars of the Fourth Month (one day of which corresponded to our 21st May), "Maou (Pleiades) is seen at the beginning of evening twilight; Nan-man (Southern door) is on the North-east." This last star is at the foot of the Centaur and is a very bright one, as those who have seen it in the southern latitudes are aware. It had, through the procession of the equinoxes, long remained beneath the horizon of Chinese astronomers, and was reserved to their maps by the Jesuits.

A census was taken of the taxable inhabitants of China 2400 B. C. and the number of persons returned was 13,533,933.—*Edwards Hist. Journal Asiatique*, 1836.

"Confucius, though his name has in the West become identified with Chinese learning, was by no means its originator. Authentic though not full records, embodying ethical and political doctrines, extend back to B. C. 2357, or to about eighteen hundred years before Confucius; while the Chinese philosophy originated with Fu-tse, who lived, according to the tradition, some twenty-three generations before the exact chronological era; which latter took place 2357 B. C. with the institution of the national cycle of sixty years. Allowing thirty years to a generation, this would place Fu-tse about 3027 B. C. It was he who substituted writing for the knotted strings that had previously formed the only means of record, and it was he who first established marriages and separate families."—*The Chinese and their Rebellions*, by T. J. Meadows. Ch. VIII.

Dr. Usher, one of the authors of the *Types of Mankind*, asserts that the plain on which the city of New Orleans is situated, is at least one hundred and fifty thousand years old. In digging down into the earth, there has been found to be a considerable depth of alluvial deposits; and the remains of ten distinct cypress forests have been discovered one above the other. Each of these forests must have required many hundreds of years to grow, and then to sink to become the foundation for another growth. In the remains of the fourth forest from the top, and seven feet below the level of the Gulf of Mexico, were found a human skull and some burned wood, which, according to Usher's estimate, were deposited there 40,000 years ago.

Mr. Bentley, whom J. C. Prichard considers to be the highest authority upon the Hindoo astronomy, says that among the ancient treatises on that science is a "compilation of Parasara, who by the position of the colures recorded by him, is ascertained to have lived about 1,200 years before the Christian era." "By a careful examination of the older systems of chronology, and a comparison of them with the poetical history contained in the Puranas, it has been proved by Mr. Bentley, that the earliest period from which the history of the Hindoos, as deduced entirely from their own literature, may be considered to commence, is about twenty-two centuries before the Christian era."—*Prichard. Natural History of Mankind. Book III. Ch. X.*

Contradictions.—Ch. XI.

§ 60. Probably the most extensive contradiction or class of contradictions in the Bible is to be found by a comparison of the history of Jesus as recorded by the three synoptists (as Mathew, Mark and Luke are called) and in *John*. I did not obtain a clear conception of these discrepancies, until too late for insertion into the text: but I shall endeavor to remedy the oversight partially by presenting here abstracts of all the movements of Jesus as recorded by Mark and John. It will be seen that both commence with the baptism and end with the crucifixion of Jesus, but disagree as to nearly all intermediate movements. Besides, neither writes an intelligible story; both omit all dates and details. Eye-witnesses, or persons who had obtained their information from eye-witnesses, must have agreed much better, and written much clearer narratives. Compare the two abstracts:—

MARK.

Jesus was baptised by John in the Jordan (I. 9): the Spirit drove him into the wilderness where he was tempted for forty days (12, 13): After John was

JOHN.

Jesus was baptised by John at Bethabara (I. 28): three days afterwards, he attended a marriage at Cana in Galilee (II. 1): he went to Capernaum (12): he

put into prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel (I. 14): he walked by the sea of Galilee (16): he entered Capernaum (21): he preached in the "synagogues throughout all Galilee" (39): he went into desert places (45): "again he entered Capernaum after some days" (II. 1): he went forth again by the sea-side (13): he went through the cornfields on the Sabbath day (23): he entered into the synagogue (III. 1): he withdrew to the sea of Galilee (7): he crossed the sea in a ship to the country of the Gadarenes (V. 1): he went to the house of Jairus, a ruler in the synagogue (38): he preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath (VI. 2): he went into a desert place privately (32): he went into a mountain to pray (46): he went into the land of Gennesaret (53): he passed through cities, villages and the country (56): he went into the border of Tyre and Sidon (VII. 24): he returned to the sea of Galilee through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis (31): he went in a ship to Dalmanutha (VIII. 10): he recrossed the sea to the other side (13): he went to Bethsaida (22): he went "into the the towns of Cesarea Philippi" (27): after six days he went up into a mountain and was transfigured (IX. 2): he came down (9): he passed through Galilee (30): he came to Capernaum (33): he came into the coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan (X. 1): he came to Jericho (16): he came to Bethphage (XI. 1):

went to Jerusalem (13): he drove money-changers out of the Temple (15): he came into the land of Judea before John was cast into prison (22. 24): he went to Galilee by way of Sychar in Samaria (IV. 3. 5): he entered Cana (46): he went up to Jerusalem (V. 1): he went over the sea of Galilee (VI. 1): he went into a mountain (3): he departed into a mountain (15): he crossed the sea to the vicinity of Capernaum (17. 21): he walked in Galilee (VII. 1): he abode still in Galilee (9): during the Feast of the Tabernacles he went up to Jerusalem and taught in the Temple (VII. 14): he went into the Mount of Olives (VIII. 1): "and early in the morning he came again into the Temple" (2): he "hid himself and went out of the Temple" (59): he "passed by" (IX. 1): he was at Jerusalem in the winter, at the Feast of Dedication (X. 22): he walked in the Temple (23): he went to Bethabara and "there he abode" (40): he came to Bethany (XI. 1. 17. 18): he went to the cave where Lazarus was buried (38): he "went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim" (54): then Jesus, six days before the Passover came to Bethany (XII. 1): he ate supper at the house of Martha (2): he rode on an ass into Jerusalem (12. 14): he ate supper (XIII. 2): "he raiseth from supper and laid aside his garments: and took a towel and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples

he entered Jerusalem (11) : he went out to Bethany (11) : he returned to Jerusalem (15) : he went back to Bethany and returned again to Jerusalem (20. 27) : he went to the Mount of Olives (XIII. 3) : he was in Bethany at the house of Simon, the leper (XIV. 3) : he ate the passover at a house in Jerusalem (17) : he went into the Mount of Olives (26) : where he was arrested, 46.

feet and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded" (4, 5) : he went forth to a garden beyond the brook Cedron (XVIII. 1.) : where he was arrested (12).

The Ten Commandments.

The most important part of the Mosaic Law is the "Ten Commandments." They were written by Jehovah's own "finger" on tables of stone. These tables are first mentioned in *Exodus XXXI. 18*. When Moses descended with them from the Mount, he found the Jews engaged in the worship of the Golden Calf, and his indignation was so great that he smashed Jehovah's tables (*Ex. XXXII. 19*). The Lord pardoned this burst of passion, ordered the prophet to hew two new tables, and when Moses went up the Mount again, Jehovah "took in his hand the two tables of stone" (*Ex. XXXIV. 4*) and wrote upon them "the words that were in the first tables" (*Ex. XXXIV. 2*), or else Moses wrote ; for the two statements are made (*Ex. XXXIV. 28*). This writing is expressly called "The Ten Commandments," but on examination we find that these commandments are entirely different from "The Ten Commandments" which are given in *Deuteronomy (V.)*, and which are received by Christians. Compare the two decalogues :

I. "Thou shalt worship no other god than Jehovah." *Ex. XXXIV. 14*.

II. "Thou shalt make thee no molten gods." v. 17.

III. "The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. * * All that openeth the womb is mine. All the first-born of thy sons shalt thou redeem. And none shall appear before me empty." v. 18-20.

IV. "Six days shalt thou work out on the seventh day thou shalt rest." v. 21.

V. "Thou shalt observe the Feast of the Weeks, of the First-

I. "Thou shalt have none other gods before me." *Deut. V. 7*.

II. "Thou shalt not make thee any graven image." v. 8.

III. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." v. 11.

IV. "Keep the Sabbath-day to sanctify it." v. 12.

V. "Honor thy father and thy mother." v. 16.

fruits of the wine-harvest, and the Feast of In-gathering at the years' end." v. 22.

VI. "Thrice in the year shall all your men-children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel." v. 23.

VII. "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven." v. 25.

VIII. "Neither shall the Sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left till the morning." v. 25.

IX. "The first of the first-fruits of thy land shalt thou bring unto the house of the Lord thy God." v. 26.

X. "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk." v. 26.

VI. "Thou shalt not kill." v. 17.

VII. "Neither shalt thou commit adultery." v. 18.

VIII. "Neither shalt thou steal." v. 19.

IX. "Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor." v. 20.

X. "Neither shalt thou desire * * anything that is thy neighbor's." v. 21.

The author of Deuteronomy expressly calls his decalogue the "Ten Commandments," and "he [Jehovah] wrote them upon two tables of stone" (*Deut. V. 13*). These ten commandments of *Deuteronomy* are copied from *Exodus XX.*; but there they are mentioned as part of the law, given orally to Moses, and not distinguished in importance from the law generally. The Scribes and Pharisees of Protestantism, as slavish, dishonest, and mean as ever their Jewish prototypes were, are very careful to make no allusion to the genuine decalogue.

"The solution of the objections [brought by freethinkers] to its [the Old Testament's] supposed character, which have been offered by wise and good men, are often such that is difficult to believe them to have been satisfactory to the proposer. They proceed on false principles, or assume facts without foundation. They are often superficial, evasive, or incoherent. They appear to result from a feeling of the necessity of saying something. They are often such as must be regarded by one as admissible only on the ground that there must be some mode of explaining away all such objections, and therefore that there is, in every case, a presumption in favor of a particular explanation when no other can be found so plausible." *Norton.*

Bad Morality—Ch. XIII.

§ 71. It is well known that Luther, Melancthon and Bucer declared that polygamy was not forbidden in the Bible. They consented to the marriage of the Landgrave of Hesse to a second wife, while his first wife was alive.

Missionaries of the English Church now recognise the legality of

polygamy among converts made by them to Christianity in India and South Africa.

§ 75. "The primitive Christians knew not how to reconcile the defense of their persons and property with the patient doctrine which enjoined an unlimited forgiveness of past injuries and commanded them to invite the repetition of fresh insults." *Gibbon*.

"The passive and unresisting obedience, which bows under the yoke of authority, or even of oppression, must appear, in the eyes of an absolute monarch, as the most conspicuous and useful of the evangelic virtues. The primitive Christians derived the institution of civil government, not from the consent of the people but from the decrees of Heaven. The reigning potentate, though he had usurped the position by treason and murder, immediately assumed the sacred character of vice-gerent of the Deity. To the Deity alone he was accountable for the abuse of his power; and his subjects were indissolubly bound by their oath of fidelity, to a tyrant who had violated every law of nature and society. The humble Christians were sent into the world as sheep among wolves; and since they were not permitted to employ force, in the defense of their religion, they should be still more criminal if they attempted to shed the blood of their fellow-creatures in disputing the vain privileges or the sordid possessions of this transitory life. Faithful to the doctrine of the apostle, who in the reign of Nero had preached the duty of unconditional submission as of divine command, the Christians of the three first centuries preserved their conscience pure and innocent of the guilt of secret conspiracy or open rebellion. While they experienced the vigor of persecution, they were never provoked either to meet their tyrants in the field, or indignantly to withdraw themselves into some remote and sequestered corner of the globe. The Protestants of France, of Germany, and of Britain who asserted with such intrepid courage their civil and religious freedom, have been insulted by the invidious comparison between the conduct of the primitive and the reformed Christians. Perhaps, instead of censure some applause may be due to the superior sense and spirit of our ancestors, who had convinced themselves that religion cannot abolish the inalienable rights of human nature." *Gibbon*.

§ 77. In my text, I have omitted one passage in which Jesus recommends celibacy, and I shall insert it here.—"The children of *this* world marry and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain *that* world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage."—*Luke, X. 34, 35*.

"Ambitious to exalt the perfection of the Gospel above the wisdom of philosophy, Jesus carried the duties of self-mortification, of purity, and of patience to a height which it is scarcely possible to attain, and much less to preserve in our present state of weakness

and corruption. A doctrine so extraordinary and so sublime must inevitably command the veneration of the people ; but it was ill-calculated to obtain the suffrages of those worldly philosophers, who in the conduct of this transitory life, consult only the feelings or nature and the interests of society."—*Changed from Gibbon.*

Paul considered widows to be dangerous animals—so dangerous, that he wrote as follows, for the guidance of all Christian churches, and for all time :—

" Let not a widow be taken into the number [of the church members] under three score years old, [and not then, unless] having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works : if she have brought up children ; if she have lodged strangers ; if she have washed the saints' feet ; if she have relieved the afflicted ; if she have diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse ; for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry, having damnation because they have cast off their first faith [the obligation of remaining unmarried after the death of the first husband]."—1. *Tim. V.* 9–12.

" Let the women learn silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." 1. *Tim. II.* 11, 12.

Biblical Doctrines not Original.—Ch. XIV.

Christianity a Revamp of Boodhism.

§ 81. It is only of late years that the learned men of Europe have become familiar with the doctrines and sacred books of the Boodhists. All the late writers upon Boodhism seem to recognize its remarkable resemblance to Christianity, but I have not encountered any attempt to show that the latter was derived from the earlier system. It is probable, that before many years, further researches will furnish still more evidence to support the correctness of my position that Christianity is a mere revamp of Boodhism.

The students of Oriental Literature, not many years since, differed in opinion on the question whether Boodhism, or Brahminism was the more ancient form of faith, but they are now agreed that the former was introduced as a reform of the latter. At what time this reform was first brought forward is unknown, but it is well settled that Sakya-Muni, the great Boodhist teacher and Redeemer died 543 B. C. The Boodhists recognise many previous Boodhas, and expect others in the future.

" If we addressed a Mongol or a Thibetan this question, ' Who is Boodha,' he replied instantly, ' The Savior of men.' The marvellous birth of Boodha, his life and his instructions contain a great number of moral truths and dogmas professed in Christianity, and which we need not be surprised to find also among other nations, since these truths are traditional and have always belonged to the

heritage of humanity. There must be among a Pagan people more or less of Christian truth, in proportion as they have been more or less faithful in preserving the deposit of primitive traditions. From the concordant testimony of Indian, Chinese, Thibetan, Mongol and Cingalese books, we may place the birth of Boodha about the year 960 before Christ"—*Huc's Journey through the Chinese Empire. Chap. V.*

"Boodhism is a rationalistic system [as compared with Brahminism] : and the spirit which directs it, and the consequences which follow it, permit us to consider it a species of protestantism as related to the Brahminic creed which it was to reform. * * Boodhism insists on the necessity of taking the intellectual faculties for guides in philosophic researches, and thus gives more weight to human individuality. Thence arose a tendency to elevate men in dignity, to protest in the name of liberty and reason against the oppressive rule of the castes and against the degrading worship of the Brahmins."—*Tiberghien, Essai historique sur la generation des Connaissances Humaines.*

"If we consider that Boodhism proclaimed the equality of all men and women in the sight of God, that it denounced the impious pretensions of the most mischievous priesthood the world ever saw, and that it inculcated a pure system of practical morality, can we refuse to allow that the innovation was as advantageous as it was extensively spread and adopted?"—*B. H. Hodgson. Illustrations of the Literature and Religion of the Boodhists. Preface.*

"Sakya himself, especially inculcated the maintenance of these ancient Chaityas [Brahminic rules], and the continuance of the accustomed offerings and worship. But this was doubtless only a political accommodation of his own doctrines to the existing belief of the people, adopted for the purpose of ensuring a more ready assent to his own views. Like as Mohammed recognized the prophetic missions of Moses and Elias, and the divinity of our Savior Christ, so did Sakya Muni acknowledge the holy Munis Kakut-sanda, Kanaka, and Kasyapa, as his immediate predecessors. They were, probably, heroes or saints, who had obtained the respect of their fellow-countrymen during life, and their reverence after death. Stupas had been erected over their relics in the neighborhood of Kapila and of Benares, and their worship was too firmly established, to be attacked with any chance of success. Sakya therefore artfully engrafted them in his own system as the Boodhas of a former age. In like manner, the farmer who cannot check the mountain stream, turns its course into numerous rivulets for the irrigation of his lands."—*Alexander Cunningham. P'usa Topes. Introduction.*

"Boodhism is monastic asceticism in morals, philosophic skepticism in religion."—*Hodgson.*

"Boodha [Sakya] honored humanity by his virtues."—*St. Hilaire. Du Bouddhisme.*

"Boodhism seeks the highest triumph of humanity in the exercise of devotion, self-contemplation and self-denial."—*Bjornstjerna. Theogony of the Hindoos.*

"If its morality [of Boodhism] be examined, its exhortations to guard the will, to curb the thought, to exercise kindness to others, to abstain from wrong to all, propound to its followers a very high standard of practice."—*Upham. History and Doctrines of Boodhism.*

"Boodhism has been called 'The Christianity of the East', which title, though exaggerated, expresses well enough the important services which it has rendered to humanity."—*Abel Remusat.*

"The characteristic of the Boodhist religion, which in one respect may be considered (I deprecate misconstruction) the Christianity of the remote East, seems an union of political with religious reformation—its end to substitute purer morality for the wild and multifarious idolatry into which Brahminism had degenerated, and to break down the distinction of castes."—*Milman—Hist. of Chris. Note to Ch. II., Book II.*

"It is probable that every incident in the life of Gotama [Sakyamuni] is founded in fact, which if separated from surrounding fable, would afford a history that would scarce have an equal in the importance of the lessons it would teach."—*Hardy's Manual of Boodhism.*

"The doctrines of Boodhism are not alone in the beauty of many of their sentiments, and the excellence of much of their morality. 'It is not permitted to you to render evil for evil, was one of the sentiments of Socrates. One of the triads of Druidism was to this effect: The three primary principles of religion are Obedience to the laws of God, Concern for the welfare of mankind, Suffering with fortitude all the accidents of life.' Confucius taught that men should 'treat others according to the treatment which they themselves would desire at their hands.' Similar extracts might be multiplied to an indefinite extent."—*Rev. Henry Spence Hardy—Eastern Monachism.*

To Sakya-Muni "the Indians were indebted for a code of pure and practical morality, which inculcated charity and chastity, performance of good works, and abstinence from evil, and general kindness to all living things."—*Cunningham.*

"Its [the Boodhists] doctrines and practical piety bear a strong resemblance to those of the Holy Scriptures. There is scarcely a precept or principle in the Badagat which is not found in the Bible. Did but the people act up to its principles of peace and love,

oppression and injury would be known no more within their border. Its deeds of merit are in all cases either really beneficial to mankind or harmless. It has no mythology of obscene and ferocious deities ; no sanguinary or impure observances ; no self-inflicting tortures ; no tyrannizing priesthood ; no confounding of right or wrong by making certain iniquities laudable in worship. In its moral code, its description of the purity and peace of the first ages, of the shortening of man's life because of his sins, etc., it seems to have followed genuine traditions. In almost every respect, it seems to be the best religion which man has ever invented."—*Rev. H. Malcom, Travels in South Eastern Asia.*

"Sakya-Muni undertakes and counsels a constant struggle against the body and its passions ; in his eyes the body is the only enemy of man ; and though he does not say so in those words, his asceticism has no object save to subdue the body, and the burning passions which consume it. He prescribes a strict celibacy to the monks engaged in orders, and recommends to all his believers a not less strict chastity and morality."—*St. Hilaire.*

St. Hilaire says that the whole law of Boodhism consists in renunciation [and so teach Goethe and Carlyle] ; that Sakya requires humility, disregard of worldly wealth, patience and resignation in adversity, love to enemies, religious tolerance [if so, he was in advance of Jesus], horror at falsehood, avoidance of frivolous conversation, consideration and esteem for women, sanctity of the marriage relation, non-resistance to evil, confession of sins, etc. Sakya could receive no more acceptable present than a person fit for conversion.

St. Hilaire gives the following from a Boodhist Gospel :

Boodha teaches him [Purna] in a few words that the whole law consists in renunciation ; and Purna, thenceforth dead for the world desires to go and live amidst a neighboring tribe, which he should convert to the religion of Boodha, but whose savage customs might have terrified a less resolute courage. Bhagavat seeks to turn him from this perilous design. He says :

"The men of Cronaparanta, where you are about to go, are passionate, cruel, furious and insolent. When these men, O Purna, address you to your face with malicious, gross and insulting words—when they are angry at you and about you, what will you think ?

"If the men of Cronaparanta, replied Purna, address me to my face, with malicious, gross and insulting words—if they get angry at me and abuse me, I will think to myself, 'These Cronaparantakas are certainly good men—these are mild men since they do not strike me either with their hands or with stones.'

"But if the men of Cronaparanta strike you with their hands and with stones, what will you think ?

"I will think that they are good and mild since they do not beat me with sticks, or cut me with swords.

- But if they beat you with sticks, and cut you with swords, what will you think?

- I will think that they are good and mild, since they do not deprive me completely of life.

- But if they take your life, what will you think?

- I will think that the men of Chakraganta are good and kind to deliver me with so little pain from this body full of riveness."

Other extracts might be given from the sacred scriptures of the Buddhist similar in spirit to this: but they cannot be inserted here for want of space.

- The principal characteristics of Buddhism are the doctrines of mildness, equality, and the universal brotherhood of man, which appear favorably in contrast with the exclusive and arrogant spirit of Brahminism. Buddha and his followers sought to teach all mankind the religious truths which were before considered the sole property of the privileged classes. The Brahmin morality was selfish in its nature: their religion was made for themselves alone. They subjected themselves to severe penance, but it was for the purpose of being admitted to the presence of Brahma in another life. The Asiatic Buddhist was more disinterested. He sought not to elevate himself alone, but he was virtuous and tried to make himself perfect, that he might transfer the merits of his perfection to other men. By the establishment of orders of religious mendicants who increased prodigiously in number in a very short time, Buddha attracted and furnished consolation to the poor and unfortunate. The Brahmins found fault with him for receiving as disciples, the outcasts of Hindoo society. He replied: "My law is a law of mercy for all." When the Brahmins were scandalized by seeing him receive a Tchandala woman as a true convert and sister in the faith, he said: "Between a Brahmin and a man of low caste, there is not the same difference, which there is between light and darkness. The Brahmin was not made out of the ether. He was born of a woman like a Tchandala. Why then should one be noble and the other ignoble? After the Brahmin dies, he is abandoned as an unclean, corrupt thing, just like the corpses of persons of other castes. Why then make a distinction between them?"—*Hac. Voyage dans la Chine.*

Sakya-Muni was born of the virgin wife of a Brahmin king of Magadha. At the moment of his conception, a god left heaven to enter the womb of his mother. Immediately after his birth, he was recognized as a divine person, and it was predicted that he would surpass all previous divine incarnations in holiness. Every one adored him, saluting him as the god of gods. When twenty years of age, he went into a desert and lived there in the austere retirement, poverty, simplicity, and virtue, spending his whole life in religious contemplation. Here he was tempted in various ways,

but his self-denial resisted all the seductive approaches of sin. When questioned as to the source of his virtue, he replied, "I am holy by my own merit. I have made myself my own minister. What have I to do with other teachers? Religion is my essence." At the end of six years, he went to Benares, and taught his doctrines to innumerable followers. He experienced a lively opposition from the priests attached to the ancient creeds, but he triumphed over all his adversaries, after holding a discussion with them; and their chief prostrated himself before him, and acknowledged himself vanquished. Sakya revised the code of moral and social law. He reduced the main principles of morality to four, viz. : mercy, aversion to cruelty, unbounded sympathy for all animated beings, and the strictest adherence to the law. He also gave a decalogue of commandments, viz. ; not to kill, not to steal, to be chaste, not to testify falsely, not to lie, not to swear, to avoid all impure words, to be disinterested, not to take revenge, and not to be superstitious. This code of morals was firmly established in the hearts of a number of his followers, when he left earth, to be reabsorbed in the universal soul, which is himself. At the time of his death, he was eighty-four years of age.

The authorities for this biography are the *Asie Polyglotta* of J. G. Klaproth; the *Manual of Boodhism*, by R. S. Hardy; and Huc's *Journey through the Chinese Empire*.

"In the transcendental and philosophic sense, Boodha means mind, Dharma matter, and Sangha the concretion of the two former, in the sensible, and phenomenal world. In a practical and religious sense, Boodha means the mortal author of this religion [Sakya], Dharma his law, and Sangha the congregation of the faithful."

Schmidt in his *Geschichte der Mongolen* says, that the Boodhistic Trinity is composed of Boodha, the doctrine, and the union of spirituality.

"The Dharma of Sakya-Muni was addressed wholly to the 'intellect', and sought to wean mankind from the pleasures and vanities of this life, by pointing to the transitoriness of all human enjoyment."

Numberless authorities might be cited to show that Pythagoras had adopted many of the Boodhistic doctrines, and that Plato adopted much of the Pythagorean system : and we know that the Christians adopted much of the Platonic. Beer in his *History of the Jewish Sects* says the Essenes were Jews who having fled to Egypt, at the time of the Babylonian captivity, became acquainted there with the philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato, and had engrafted it upon the doctrines of Moses ; and Raphael in his *Post-Biblical History of the Jews* adopts that opinion.

"The Samaritans in Aram were Boodhists, (see Johann von Mueller's *Welt-Geschichte*.) as were likewise the Essenes in Palestine ;

at least they were so in their esoteric doctrines, though subsequently they conformed externally to the Mosaic and afterwards to the Christian system. The Essenes subsequently joined the Gnostics. * * *

The Gnostics were divided into two chief sects—the Asiatic and the Egyptian [Therapeute?]. The former were properly Buddhists, who for the most part adopted the outward forms of Christianity, because, in accordance with their own tenets, they considered Jesus to be a Buddha, who had appeared on earth. * * * *

The Druids, too, in ancient Britain were Buddhists: they admitted the metempsychosis, the pre-existence of souls, and their return to the realms of universal space. They had a triad consisting, like that of the Buddhists, of a creator, a sustainer, and a destroyer. The Druids constituted a sacerdotal order, which reserved to itself the exclusive privilege of expounding the mysteries of religion. Their wisdom was so renowned that Lucan says in his epic poem, 'If ever the knowledge of the gods has come down to earth, it is to the Druids of Britain.' The Druids must have obtained their doctrine through traffic of the Phœnicians with Britain, the latter people having been of the Buddhist creed. Nay, even in the far North did Buddhism make its way: for it cannot be denied that the doctrine of Odin is an echo of that of Buddha. The Scandinavians had their divine trinity of the creator, sustainer, and destroyer." *Bjornstjerna*.

"The famous doctrines of Pythagoras are intensely Buddhistical." *Cunningham*.

"There are three philosophical sects among the Jews—the followers of the first of whom are the Pharisees; of the second, the Sadducees, and the third sect, which pretends to a severer discipline, is called Essenes. These are Jews by birth, and they cherish mutual love beyond other men. They reject pleasure as evil; and they look upon temperance and a conquest over the passions as the greatest virtue. * * * The Essenes despise riches and are so liberal as to excite our admiration. Nor can any be found amongst them who is more wealthy than the rest: for it is a law with them that those who join their order, should distribute their possessions among the members, the property of each being added to that of the rest, as being all brethren. * * * As to their piety towards God it is very extraordinary: for before sun-rising they speak not a word about profane matters, but put up certain prayers which they have received from their forefathers, as if they made a supplication for its rising. * * * Their doctrine is this: That bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of, is not permanent: but that the souls are immortal and continue forever.—*Josephus War. II. 7.* Translated in *Haendel's Origin of Christianity*.

"The doctrine of the Essenes is that all things should be ascribed to God. They teach the immortality of souls, and esteem it at the

rewards of righteousness are to be earnestly striven for : and when they send what they have dedicated to God into the Temple, they do not offer sacrifices, because they have more pure lustrations of their own.”—*Josephus Antiquities XVIII. 1 in Hennell.*

“ Palestine and Syria are not unproductive of honorable and good men, but are occupied by numbers, not inconsiderable, compared even with the very populous nation of the Jews. These, exceeding four thousand, are called Essenes, which name, though not, in my opinion, formed by strict analogy, corresponds in Greek to the word ‘ holy.’ For they have attained the highest holiness in the worship of God, and that not by sacrificing animals, but by cultivating purity of heart. They live principally in villages. Some cultivate the ground : others pursue the arts of peace, and such employments as are beneficial to themselves without injury to their neighbors. They are the only people, who though destitute of money and possessions, felicitate themselves as rich, deeming riches to consist in frugality and contentment. * * Of their love to God they give innumerable proofs by living a life of continued purity, unstained by oaths and falsehoods, by regarding him as the author of every good, and the cause of no evil. They evince their attachment to virtue by their freedom from avarice, from ambition, from sensual pleasure ; by their temperance and patience ; by their frugality, simplicity and contentment ; by their humility, their regard to the laws and other similar virtues. Their love to man is evinced by their benignity, their equity and their liberality, of which it is not improper to give a short account, though no language can adequately describe it.

“ In the first place there exists among them no house, however private, which is not open to the reception of all the rest, and not only the members of the same society assemble under the same domestic roof, but even strangers of the same persuasion have free admission to join them. There is but one treasure whence all derive subsistence ; and not only their provisions, but their clothes are common property.”—*Philo 30, A. D.*

“ As early as the priesthood of Jonathan Apphus (B. C. 161.), the Jews were divided into three principal sects of Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes, of which the latter, consisting chiefly of the lower ranks, presents a remarkable picture of simplicity and moral purity, tinged by the austere spirit of monachism.”—*Hennell.*

The similarity of the characters of the divinities worshipped in early times in Hindostan, Rome, and the Teutonic nations, as well as the certainty that all those nations were descended in blood from one stock, enables us to see that the similar ideas were received among them, though widely separated. The following are the names of the days of the week in Sanscrit, Latin, Teutonic and English.

<i>Sanscrit.</i>	<i>Latin.</i>	<i>Teutonic.</i>	<i>English.</i>
Aditya-var.	Dies Solis.	Son-daeg.	Sunday.
Soma-var.	Dies Lunæ.	Moon-daeg.	Monday.
Mangala-var.	Dies Martis.	Tuis-daeg.	Tuesday.
Boodha-var.	Dies Mercurii.	Wodens-daeg.	Wednesday.
Vrihaspate-var.	Dies Jovis.	Thors-daeg.	Thursday.
Sukra-var.	Dies Veneris.	Frigas-daeg.	Friday.
Sani-var.	Dies Saturnæ.	Seternes-daeg.	Saturday.

Each day has the same name in meaning in the four languages. They are the day of the sun, of the moon, of the God of war, of the God who came down to earth, of the God of Gods, of the Love-Goddess, and of the Time-God. The aboriginal Latins and Teutons came from Hindostan, and brought their Gods and languages along with them.

“The Boodhists of the West, accepting Christianity on its first announcement, at once introduced the rites and observances which for centuries had already existed in India. From that country Christianity derived its monastical institutions, its form of ritual and church service, its councils or convocations to settle schisms on points of faith; its worship of relics, and working of miracles through them; and much of the discipline and dress of the clergy, even to the shaved heads of the monks and friars.”—*Præsep.*—*Quoted in Pococke's India in Greece.*

Landresse, in his introduction to the *Foe Koui Ki*, translated by Abel Remusat from the Chinese, expresses his high admiration of the heroism with which the Boodhist missionaries before Christ crossed streams and seas which had arrested armies, traversed deserts and mountains upon which no caravans dared to venture, and braved dangers and surmounted obstacles which had defied the omnipotence of the emperors.

Bjornstjerna, in 1844, estimated the number of followers of the different creeds as follows: Boodhists, 350,000,000; Christians, 230,000,000; Mohammedans, 160,000,000; Brahmins, 150,000,000; Pagans, 70,000,000; Jews, 10,000,000: in all 1,000,000,000.

“There is not a dress office or ceremony in the church of Rome, to which the devil has not here [among the Boodhists of Cochin China] provided some counterpart” (*Father Boori. Missionary in the XVIIth century.*). “Even when he [Boori] began inveighing against the idols, he was told that these were the images of departed great men, whom they worshipped exactly on the same principle, and in the same manner, as the Catholics did the images of the Apostles and martyrs.”—*Murray's History of Discoveries in Asia.*

Life is a state of probation and misery, according to Boodhism.—*Upham. Ch. VI.*

Boodhism “inculcates benevolence, tenderness, forgiveness of

injuries, and love of enemies", and "forbids sensuality; love of pleasure; and attachments to worldly objects."—*Judson*.

"The doctrine of Gaudma Boodha is a reforming scheme, which was obliged to bend to circumstances, and to incorporate parts of other systems."—*Upham. Ch. XI.*

"At that time all beings lived in an *Assankaya* of years; no sin was there in the world: the immense duration of their life caused men to forget their birth and to be unmindful of death: they knew not the infirmities of life nor the miseries of the world." *The Mahavanso. Buddhist Scripture.*

"The great schism which divided the Eastern world and made the disunion irreconcilable seems in fact to have originated in the time when the Munis or teachers of the Boodhist doctrine, either from reforming principle or a love of power or a combination of both, proceeded to have their own theories and sacred books, not explanatory of, but in direct opposition to the Vedas; teaching their followers that they alone were the true believers of the saving faith, throwing down the barriers of caste, and elevating the dogmas of their faith, above the sacerdotal class, and admitting every one, who felt an inward desire, to the ministry and preaching of their religion. A system thus associating itself with the habits, feelings and personal advantages of its disciples could not fail to make rapid progress, wherever it was contrasted with the fenced-in privileges, immutable dogmas, and haughty pretensions of the sacerdotal class of the Brahmins." *Upham. History and Doctrines of Boodhism.*

The Mosaic law a revamp of that of Egypt.

§ 82. "It is strange that the Egyptian religion, though so absurd, should yet have borne so great a resemblance to the Jewish, that ancient writers, even of the greatest genius, were not able to discover any difference between them. For it is remarkable that both Tacitus and Suetonius, when they mention that decree of the Senate under Tiberius, by which the Egyptian and Jewish proselytes were banished from Rome, expressly treat these religions as the same; and it appears that even the decree itself was founded on that supposition." *Hume. Natural History of Religion.*

My principle authority for the statements in regard to the religious ceremonies of the Egyptians is J. G. Wilkinson, *On the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*. He has published two series of volumes on the same subject and under the same title, but they are made substantially one work by the consecutive numbering of the chapters,—the second series beginning with Chapter XI as the first ends with Chapter X.

In chapter XII. he says that the Egyptians had sacred books of very ancient date, long prior to the age of Moses; that the Egyptian priests were monotheists: that the priests possessed almost

absolute power ; that the probabilities are that Egypt was ruled by priests before there were any kings ; that they consecrated each day and month to a particular deity ; and that the doctrine of a Trinity was commonly received.

In chap. XI. it is stated that the Egyptians offered the first fruits of the lentils to the God Harpocrates.

In chap. XV. Wilkinson says that private fasting and penance were frequently required by the Egyptian priests ; that incense, libations, and sacrifices of animals and fruits were frequently offered to the Gods ; that red oxen were preferred, and that the sacrificial victims were slain by cutting their throats ; that the Egyptian priests were in the habit of carrying the shrines of their gods in procession as the Jewish priests carried the ark ; that the Jewish kings and priests were anointed ; and that the cross was a common sign on very ancient Egyptian monuments.

In chap. XIII. Wilkinson gives a picture of a breast-plate marked with the figures of Re and Thmei, such as was worn by the Egyptian judges, and each figure has a cross in its hand. In the same chapter he cites the authority of Herodotus to prove the fact that 700,000 pilgrims visited Bubastis annually.

The Egyptian priests "looked upon the divinity as a sole and individed being" though the people were polytheists.

"The priesthood took a prominent part in every public proceeding ; there was no ceremony in which they did not participate, and even military regulations were subject to the influence of the sacerdotal caste." Ch. XV.

Osiris granted to the Egyptian kings dominion over the whole world. XV.

When about to undertake an expedition against foreign nations, the priests gave the king the falchion of victory, to secure the defeat of the people whose country he was about to invade, saying "Take this weapon, and smite with it the head of the impate Gentiles." XV.

"The oldest [Egyptian] monuments which remain bear ample evidence of its [the trinity's] having been their belief at the earliest periods of which any records exist, and Osiris, the Judge and President of Amenti, is mentioned in tombs belonging to contemporaries of the kings who erected the pyramids, upwards of 3000 before our era." *Wilkinson XII.*

"Indeed, if at any early period the religion of Egypt bore a different character, or if any great change took place in its doctrines, this must have been long before the foundation of the monuments that remain ; and with the exception of some addition to the catalogue of minor deities, and an alteration in the name of Amun, we perceive no change in the religion from the earliest times to the reigns of the Ptolemies and the Cesars." *Same, XII.*

Prichard, in his work on *Egyptian Mythology*, mentions the following resemblances between the ecclesiastical systems of Egypt and Judea.

1. The high-priesthood was hereditary in a particular house : so was the pontificate of each particular god in Egypt.

2. The judicial office belonged to the Levites, as it did in Egypt to the priests.

3. The Shoterim, or Scribes, were generally of the tribe of Levi. Their office corresponds exactly with that of the Hierogrammates in Egypt.

4. Medicine, like other parts of knowledge, seems to have belonged to the priests in Palestine, as in Egypt.

“The Egyptians recognized among their esoteric or philosophical doctrines, the existence of a spiritual and eternal being : but this tenet was carefully concealed from the people, instead of becoming the foundation and most conspicuous part of the popular religion.”—*Prichard*.

“The Egyptian religion is the produce of the country, peculiar to itself, and without any marks of foreign improvement or innovation.”—*Jablonski*.

Plutarch says, that the following sentence was inscribed in the Temple of Sais, near a veiled statue :—“I am all that is, and will be : and my veil hath never yet been raised by any mortal.”

Hengstenberg, one of the most learned and orthodox of the German scholars of the present time, has written a book, entitled *Moses and Egypt*, in which he endeavors to show that the writer of the *Pentateuch* was really acquainted with the customs of Egypt. He adduces in evidence many of these same resemblances between the two ecclesiastical systems which I have mentioned.

Christian Doctrines known to many Sects before Christ.

§ 83. “The genius of Plato, informed by his own moderation, or by the traditional knowledge of the priests of Egypt, had ventured to explore the mysterious nature of the Deity. When he had elevated his mind to the sublime contemplation of the first self-existent, necessary cause of the universe, the Athenian sage was incapable of conceiving how the simple unity of his essence could admit the infinite variety of distinct and successive ideas which compose the model of the intellectual world ; how a Being purely incorporeal could execute that perfect model and mould with a plastic hand the rude and independent chaos. The vain hope of extricating himself from these difficulties, which must oppress the feeble powers of the human mind, might induce Plato to consider the divine nature under the three-fold modifications of the First cause, the reason or *Logos*, and the soul or spirit of the universe. His poetical imagination sometimes fixed and animated these metaphysical abstractions ;

the three archical or original principles were represented in the Platonic systems as three Gods united with each other by a mysterious and ineffable generation : and the *Logos* was particularly considered under the more accessible character of the Son of an eternal Father and the Creator and Governor of the World. Such appear to have been the secret doctrines which were cautiously whispered in the gardens of the Academy, and which, according to the more recent disciples of Plato, could not be understood till after an assiduous study for thirty years."—*Gibbon, Chap. XXI.—Decline and Fall.*

In a note affixed to this chapter, Guizot says that, according to the Zend-Avesta, it is by the word more ancient than the world that Ormuzd created the Universe. He also says that Philo personified the *Logos* as the ideal archetype of the world.

"*Logos*" is the Greek term, in the first verse of the Evangel of John, translated - Word" in the English Bible. It should have been translated - Reason" or - Wisdom." John says - In the beginning was the Word [*Logos*, Jesus] and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Hammer-Purgstall in his *Les Mithraïques* says that Mithra was the mediator, and incarnate Redeemer of the Persians, that his worship was introduced into Rome 68 B. C., that Mithra was the son of a virgin, that the initiated were taught the doctrine of the trinity and the immortality of the soul, and that the "resemblance of the ceremonies of the mysteries of Mithra with those of the church of Jesus was confessed by the fathers of the church, such as Justin and Tertullian." Among these ceremonies, there was a eucharist, which consisted in the oblation of bread and the chalice.

The Buddhist books contain many threats of punishment for unbelief.

The name "Brahmin" means "twice-born," regenerated. Jesus says, unless a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

"Faith and love are not less the fundamental powers of the Platonic than of the Christian soul-life." *Ackermann.*

The Buddhists in Thibet have an infallible head, as the Catholics have in Rome.

To Plato "we owe the first formal development of the doctrine of the spirituality of the soul, and the first attempt towards demonstrating its immortality." *Teusmann.*

"Plato passed among a large portion of his hearers for the actual son of Apollo, and his reputed father, Aristo, was admonished in a dream to respect the person of his wife, Periktione, until after the birth of the child of which she was then pregnant by Apollo." *Hardy, Manual of Buddhism.*

"There is one Indian [Hindoo] legend of considerable importance, the age of which Mr. Bentley endeavors to decide by astronomical computation ; this is the story of Krishna, the Indian Apollo. In native legends, he is represented as an avatar, or incarnation of the divinity ; at his birth, choirs of devatus [angels] sung hymns of praise, while shepherds surrounded his cradle. It was necessary to conceal his birth from the tyrant Cansa, to whom it had been foretold that the infant should destroy him. The child escaped, with his parents, beyond the coast of Lamouna. For a time he lived in obscurity, but then commenced a public life, distinguished for prowess and beneficence. He washed the feet of the Brahmins, and preached the most excellent doctrines ; but at length the power of his enemies prevailed : he was nailed, according to one account, to a tree, by an arrow ; and, before dying, foretold the miseries which would take place in the Cali-Yuga, or wicked age of the world, thirty-six years after his death." *Cardinal Wiseman.*

"That the name of Chrishna, and the general outline of his history, were long anterior to the birth of our Savior, and probably to the time of Homer, we know very certainly."—*Sir Wm. Jones.*

The last supper, in which the Christians eat bread and drink wine, calling them the flesh and blood of Jesus, is an imitation of the human sacrifices of the heathens, in which they ate the flesh and drank the blood of the victim.

"Ahriman", in the Zoroastrian mythology [which, it is universally acknowledged—I believe—by Oriental scholars, is not of later date than 450 B. C.], "slew Kayomorts, the first human being, who was both man and woman : from his pieces grew up a plant, which bore, instead of fruit, Meshia and Meshiane, the real ancestors of the human family. Both were in the beginning innocent, and formed for heaven, and honored Ormuzd as their creator : but they were seduced by Ahriman, who brought them fruit which they ate, and lost by transgression their happiness. The woman was the first who sacrificed to the Devs. After fifty years they had children, Siahmak and Veshak, and died one hundred years old : for their sins they were doomed to suffer hell-torments till the resurrection."—*Prichard. Nat. Hist. Man. B. IV. Ch. X.*

"If I did not know it would be sending coals to Newcastle, I would, with all my dimness of eyes and trembling of fingers, copy in Greek the hymn of Cleanthes [given in Cudworth], and request you to compare it with anything of Moses, of David, or of Solomon. Instead of those ardent oriental figures, which are so difficult to understand, we find that divine simplicity which constitutes the charm of Grecian eloquence in prose and verse."—*John Adams. Letter to Jefferson. Sept. 22, 1813.*

Testament show that mild morality was known on earth before the time of Christ.

"What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." *Micah. VI. 8.*

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink. For thou heapeth coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee." *Prov. XXV. 21.*

"Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me." *Prov. XXX. 8.*

"The meek shall inherit the earth." *Ps. XLVII. 11.*

"Keep thy tongue from evil." *Ps. XXXIV. 13.*

"Say not thou, 'I will recompense, but wait on the Lord.'" *Prov. XX. 22.*

"A lawyer asked him [Jesus] a question tempting him, and saying 'Master which is the great commandment of the law? Jesus said unto him 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'" *Mat. XXII. 35—40.*

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might." *Deut. VI. 5.*

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." *Lev. XIX. 18.*

The works of Plato contain numerous passages similar to phrases used in the New Testament—such as: a rich man shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven: fear not them who kill the body: obey God rather than man: the kingdom of God is within you: he that is righteous doeth righteousness: no man can serve both God and mammon: set your affections on things above: what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, &c. St. John speaks of Jesus as the *Logos*, the "word," and *logos* had been used in the same sense by Plato and Philo long before, and, in fact, the same word was used says Remusat, by Laot-se in China 600 B. C. The greater portion of the sermon on the Mount is a patchwork, made up of phrases from the Talmud, the writings of the Jewish Rabbi's, the Old Testament and the works of the Platonists.

"The week of seven days was a common measure of time from the earliest ages among the Asiatic nations." *Lepsius.*

Some one asked Diogenes the way to be revenged on an enemy? The cynic replied: "Be a more virtuous." *Plat. de aud. port. Quoted by Barthelémy*

Socrates said, it was not permitted to return evil for evil. *Plato in Crit. Quoted by Barthelémy.*

return, and which alone can irradiate (not our visual organs merely), but our souls and our intellects." *Sir Wm. Jones.*

"It is incontestible that the Brahmins have formed their people to such a degree of gentleness, courtesy, temperance, and chastity, or at least have so far confirmed them in these virtues, that Europeans frequently appear in comparison with them as beastly, drunken, or mad. Their air and language are unrestrainedly elegant, their behavior friendly, their persons clean, their way of life simple and harmless. Their children are educated without severity; yet they are not destitute of knowledge, and still less of quiet industry or nicely imitative art. * * * The leading idea the Brahmins entertain of God is grand and beautiful; their morality is pure and elevated; and even their fables, when scanned by the eye of reason, are refined and charming."—*J. G. Herder—Philosophy of History.*

"The morality of the Zend-Avesta is entitled to praise; purity of word, action and thought is repeatedly inculcated. To multiply the human species, increase its happiness, and prevent evil are the general duties inculcated by Zoroaster to his disciples; agriculture and the multiplication of useful arts are particularly recommended to them. 'He,' says Zoroaster, 'who sows the ground with diligence, acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by 10,000 prayers.' The disciple of Zoroaster is enjoined to pardon injuries, to honor his parents and the king whose rights are derived from Ormuzd, to respect old age, to observe general gentleness of manners, and to practice universal benevolence."—*Butler—Horæ Biblicæ.*

"Well-doing," said Socrates "is the noblest pursuit of man. The best man and the most beloved by the Gods is he who as a husbandman performs well the duties of husbandry: as a surgeon those of medical art; in political life, his duty towards the commonwealth. But the man who does nothing well, is neither useful or agreeable to the Gods."

"The superior man looks at his situation and acts accordingly. He concerns not himself with what is beyond his station. If he possesses riches, he acts as a rich man ought to do. If poor, he acts as a poor man ought to act. To a stranger, he acts the part of a stranger. If a sufferer, he acts as a sufferer ought to do. The superior man enters into no situation where he is not himself. If he hold a superior situation, he does not treat with contempt those below him. If he occupy an inferior station, he does not court the favor of his superiors; he corrects himself and blames not others. He feels no dissatisfaction. He grumbles not with Heaven above; he feels no resentment with man below. Hence, the superior man dwells at ease, calmly awaiting the will of Heaven. But the mean man walks in dangerous paths and covets what he has no right to obtain."—*Confucius.*

"Alas, I have never seen one love virtue as we love beauty."—*Confucius*.

"To cultivate virtue with undeviating singleness of intention, without regard to a long or short life, is the way to fulfil the divine decree."—*Mencius, a Chinese Philosopher, (350 B. C.)*

"Let us vigorously exert ourselves to act towards others, as we wish them to do to us."—*Mencius*.

There is nothing more elevated in all the New Testament than the following from the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus : "Remember that you must behave at life as at an entertainment. Is anything brought around to you, put out your hand, and take your share with moderation. Doth it pass you, do not stop it. Is it not yet come, do not stretch forth your desire towards it, but wait till it reaches you. Thus do with regard to children, to a wife, to a public office, to riches, and you will some day be a worthy partner of the Feast of the Gods. And if you do not so much as take things which are set before you, but are even able to despise them, then you will not only be a partner of the Feast of Gods, but a sharer in their Empire also."

"Let your most secret acts be as though you had all the world for witnesses. Do not expect that reprehensible words will be forgotten ; you may hide them from others, but never from yourself. Devote your leisure hours to hearing counsel from the wise : alleviate the sufferings of the virtuous poor : the recollection of charity well applied is one of the most precious forms of wealth. If you should be clothed with a high office, let your subordinates be upright men, and when you leave your position, let it be with honor rather than with wealth."—*Isocrates*.

"Do not allow thyself to be carried away by anger. Angry words and scornful looks are sins. To strike a man, or vex him with words, is a sin. Even the intention to strike another, merits punishment. Opposition to peace is a sin. Reply to thine enemy with gentleness."—*Zend-Avesta*.

"All virtues are comprised in justice : he who is just, is a good man."—*Theognis, 500 B. C.*

"Do not be content with being just : prevent injustice."—*Phocylides, 450 B. C.*

"Do not that, which you would disapprove in others."—*Thales, 600 B. C.*

"Let your first law be, to respect yourself."—*Pythagoras, Golden Versæ, VIII.*

"What gravity, what constancy, magnanimity, probity, fidelity, ever was so great—what virtue of every kind so excellent in any

people, as to admit them to a comparison with our ancestors?"—*Cicero*.

"Do not abandon your eyes to the pleasures of sleep, without having thrice examined the deeds of your day. What fault have I committed? What have I done? To what duty have I been false? Commence with the first of your actions, and thus go through all the others. Reproach yourself with the evil which you have done: rejoice over the good."—*Pythagoras. Golden Verse. XXIII.*

"Look for pleasure in the pursuit of wisdom, as giving birth to all the virtues. These unite in teaching us, that no man can live happily, who does not live wisely, conscientiously, and justly: nor on the other hand, can he live wisely and justly, without living happily: for as virtue is necessary to a life of happiness, so is a life of happiness necessary to virtue."—*Epictetus*.

"The devout uneducated Chinese, man or woman, habitually adores and supplicates the idol-god in preference to Heaven, just as we see in Bavaria or Italy, the devout but mentally unenlightened Romanist habitually adore and supplicate the images of the Saints in preference to God."—*Meadows*

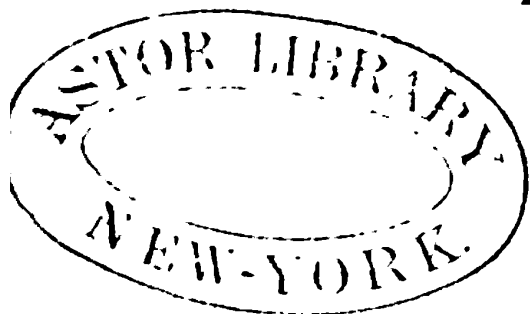
THE
EVIDENCES
AGAINST
CHRISTIANITY.

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CHAPTER XV.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY.

"To trace an error to its source is to refute it."—DUGALD STEWARD.

§. 84. In reply to the proof that the doctrines of the Bible were not original with the authors of that book, the Christians assert that these doctrines had been communicated to men by Jehovah in a previous revelation : and having been handed down by tradition, were reānnounced by divine authority, to the Hebrews. And they say that the Bible refers to these earlier revelations in mentioning the intercourse of the Deity with Noah, Abraham, and other patriarchs. But the *Pentateuch* gives a record of the substance, and in most cases of the very words of that alleged intercourse, and most plainly implies that nothing passed more important than those matters recorded in express terms. Will any reasonable man pretend that Jehovah revealed himself as a Trinity to Noah, or Abraham, when he spoke of himself as one ? Or that he taught them, of an incarnate divinity who should expiate the sin of Adam, when there is no hint of such an incarnation in the Mosaic books, nor the slightest indication of an idea in the mind of the writer of a future life or of the possibility that the sin of Adam would or could be expiated in any way ? In regard to the trinity, incarnation and atonement—the three great ideas of the New Testament "dispensation,"—we have abundant warrant, from history and the Bible, for asserting that they were common among heathen nations before they were taught by the followers of Jesus. The assertion of the Christians that these doctrines must have been

revealed by Jehovah before being taught among the Hindoos and Egyptians, made in the most positive manner, without a particle of evidence, is a fair specimen of the manner in which they defend their creed. They imagine that their superstition is a God-given revelation, and whenever it gets into trouble, they take for granted that the best theory for explaining away the difficulty, must be true. When they assert a previous revelation, they should produce affirmative evidence, and really prove the assertion ; but that they cannot do. There is no peculiarity, in any of their doctrines, which marks them as evidently of superhuman, or divine origin. Indeed, we do not know what a divine idea would be ; the thought which we can grasp, by that grasping becomes human. It is brought down to our level ; we have no right to assert that it might not have originated in a human mind. We have no right to assert that it did not originate in a human mind, without producing some positive evidence. Man has no rule by which he can "distinguish * between an idea revealed to him, and an idea conceived by him." Only one kind of testimony of the divine origin of doctrines has ever been offered to mankind, so far as I know : and that was the report of miracles. There is no mention in the sacred books of the Hindoos, Egyptians, Jews, or Galileans, that their prophets endeavored to show the necessity of a divine origin for their teachings, because they were too great and sublime to have been first conceived in a human mind. I may then assume that there is nothing in the doctrines themselves evidently divine : and next I shall endeavor to show that these doctrines did not spring, in the perfection of their present development, from the brain of Jehovah, but grew by slow, gradual, and natural processes, from the low instincts which lead savages to worship stocks and stones. If there was such a growth, it would be absurd to believe that any revelation was concerned in it. Some of the Christian philosophers indeed, in the face of the notorious facts of the advance of their would-be prophets to higher ideas, with the progress of civilization, have contended that Jehovah held back his divine truths till men were ready to receive them ; but this

* GREG. Creed of Christendom.

alleged method of divine procedure is so exceedingly like the mere natural progress of human thought, that no valid distinction can be made between them. Besides, if there were a possibility of such a natural growth, there would be no probability in the claim of a miraculous creation: "what * the human intellect could ascertain, it would be superfluous for God to reveal." If Jehovah were to keep back his truths, until he saw that men were on the point of discovering them without his assistance, and then reveal them only because he could conceal them no longer, he would, as it appears to me, deserve no very great thanks from humanity—at least in so far as that conduct might be concerned.

§ 85. The savage in his sense of dependence, in the consciousness of his weakness as compared with the great forces of nature, reasons from his own personality to conceive of some great personal manager or managers of the affairs of nature. It is possible that some tribes were blind to the distinctions between animate and inanimate beings, and supposed all the objects of sense to have a life and personality more or less similar to their own. The conception of a superior being was soon followed by an endeavor to propitiate his favor, and in accordance with human analogies, it was supposed that the divinities must be pleased with such shows of subjection and subserviency as were usually resorted to, to gain the favor of men. Public worship among wondering and superstitious savages was suited to take their senses captive ; and they soon universally adopted the practice of endeavoring to propitiate the mysterious powers. A few of the most stupid tribes of men in high northern latitudes seem to have no conception of supernatural beings, and have no ideas of worship. But these are rare cases, and the want of the idea of a divinity is probably owing more to the sparseness of the population, and the consequent limited interchange of thought, than to any other cause. The lowest grade of savage in Africa and in the South Sea Islands has his god—an idol or stone—which he worships. As he progresses in art, he improves the form of his idol, and at last comes to consider his idol as the mere representative of the divine—not the divinity

* GREG.

himself. In some stages of his mental growth, the idea occurs to him that the powers of nature and the heavenly bodies are divine, and he worships them. The savage considers his idol as his own family-god ; the god and man are exclusive in their relations to each other. Exclusive favor and protection are no more than a fair consideration for exclusive worship. Thus, when there was a dispute between Jacob and Laban, they called upon "the God of Abraham and the God of Nachor," the gods of their [respective] fathers, to judge between them (*Gen. XXXI. 53*). When the population became dense, and feelings of nationality arose, the system of family-gods disappeared and that of national gods was introduced. Worship was reduced to an art, theology to a science. "The favor of the gods was believed to be obtained by means similar to those which are most efficacious with powerful mortals—homage and tribute, or in the language of religion, worship and sacrifice. * * * The image of earthly kings applied to the heavenly powers, suggested the persuasion that the efficacy of a sacrifice depended on its value, and that the feeling which prompted the offering was not merely to be expressed, but to be measured by it. This persuasion was cherished by two popular prejudices : by the notion that the gods were capable of envy and jealousy, which men might allay by costly profusion in their gifts, and by the view taken of the sacrifice as a banquet for the gods, the more agreeable in proportion as it was rich and splendid."

The belief in the existence of evil divinities was probably as old as the faith in any kind of divine existence ; but, after man arrived at the conception of one Creator, they found that, if he were a good divinity, they must still have an evil spirit to account for the existence of evil. As man feels in his own mind the constant struggle of high and low impulses—as good and evil are naturally antagonistic—it was supposed that there were two great spirits who are in constant conflict. The good spirit created the world good ; the evil one corrupted it ; and man suffers the consequences. The Persians imagined the existence of a mediator between them—a divine man—and the three made the Persian Trinity. The Brahmins conceived of the three-fold divinity as the same person in the various characters of

Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer. The Boodhists made their Trinity with the Deity, his law or "word," and the union of both. A Trinity, popular in Egypt, was composed of a masculine and feminine (the latter might be understood as the material universe) divinity, and their son, who conquered the evil spirit in battle, and thus was the savior of mankind. The conception of a purely spiritual god, who never manifested himself directly to human eyes, was found to be too exalted for the mass of the people ; they wanted a deity who had placed himself on their own level ; who had sympathies with them, with whom they could sympathize.

The divinities were conceived as possessing bodies and minds very similar to those of men ; but with greater grasp of reason, stronger passions, and greater means of knowledge. Since the earth appeared to comprise the whole creation, except the diminutive celestial bodies, which evidently moved round it, and were made only to give light and measure time for it ; since man was obviously the highest grade of terrestrial existence ; and since the gods were conceived only as invisible and superhuman men, dwelling in the clouds ; so it was also presumed that they occupied all their time with human affairs, and frequently came down to earth and took part in the transactions of men. The great events of nature were supposed to be the doings of the gods ; or, if the divine interpositions were not recognized as of daily or frequent occurrence, it was at least supposed that they had been in earlier times. The Jew in the time of Jesus "looked* for wonders and unusual combinations in the past ; he expected to hear of Jehovah, Satan, and the angels, moving and operating together upon earth ; he pictured to himself the foretime as a theatre in which the Heavenly powers interfered directly, obviously, and frequently, for the protection of their favorites and the punishment of their foes. The rational conception, then only dawning in his mind, of a systematic course of nature, was absorbed by this fervent and lively faith. And if he could have been supplied with as perfect and philosophical a history of his own real past time, as we are now enabled to furnish with regard to the last century of England or France, faithfully recording all

* Altered from Grote's Greece.

the successive events, and accounting for them by known positive laws, but introducing no special interventions of Jehovah—such a history would have appeared to him not merely unholy and unimpressive, but destitute of all plausibility or title to credence.” As it was supposed, that the celestial personages had frequently come down to earth and taken part in human affairs, fought in mortal battles, and fallen in love with mortal women, so it was natural that the poets and romancers should produce narratives of these divine adventures. These narratives appearing probable in themselves, and being calculated to have an edifying influence on the religious conceptions of the people, were received as true, and, of course, no subject could be more attractive than the biography of the divinities. “These myths* or current stories, the spontaneous and earliest growth of the Jewish mind, constituted, at the same time, the entire intellectual stock of the age to which they belonged. They are the common root of all those different ramifications into which the mental activity of the Jews subsequently diverged, containing as it were the preface and germ of their history, poetry, and theology. * * * * They furnished aliment and solution to the vague doubts and aspirations of the age ; they explained the origin of those customs and standing peculiarities with which men were familiar ; they impressed moral lessons, awakened patriotic sympathies, and exhibited in detail the shadowy but anxious presentiments of the vulgar, as to the agency of the gods ; moreover they satisfied that craving for adventure and appetite for the marvellous, which has in modern times become the province of fiction proper. It is difficult, we may say, it is impossible, for a man of mature age to carry back his mind to his conceptions, such as they stood when he was a child, growing naturally out of his imagination and feelings, working upon a scanty stock of materials, and borrowing from authorities whom he blindly followed but imperfectly apprehended. A similar difficulty occurs when we attempt to place ourselves in the historical and *quasi* philosophical point of view which the ancient myths present to us. We can follow perfectly the imagination and feeling which dictated these tales, and we can admire and sympathize with

* Altered from Grote.

them as animated, sublime, and affecting poetry ; but we are too much accustomed to matter of fact and philosophy of a positive kind, to be able to conceive a time when these beautiful fancies were construed literally, and accepted as serious reality."

With progress in the arts came intercourse between nations. Travellers soon discovered that the assumption of the exclusive possession of devout and moral men by their respective creeds, were narrow and most injurious prejudices. They saw that the various national divinities were described in similar words, and worshipped with similar ceremonies. They found that justice and benevolence were not confined to any one country, or limited within the bounds of any one form of faith. They discovered the absurdity of believing in a family-god such as was the god of Abraham, or a national god, such as the Jewish divinity in the time of the Judges : they rose to the conception of one sole creator and governor of the universe.

As a necessary consequence of the belief in the immediate divine administration of all earthly affairs, the people supposed that every piece of good or evil fortune was the reward or punishment of a good or evil deed. Where the connection between the good deed and the good fortune—between the evil deed and the evil fortune—was not seen, it was presumed that there was some counterbalancing deed, perhaps of a prior date—perhaps even of a remote ancestor. This was the universal opinion of early antiquity—in Greece and Rome as well as in Judea. With the progress of thought, men saw that this principle was unreasonable. But good and evil must be rewarded and punished : to assert the contrary, would be to blaspheme the justice of the gods. A future life was conceived of, as an explanation of the difficulty : and the new state of existence was looked upon as an important step forward—elevating greatly the dignity and importance of humanity. The new birth of a foul worm in the form of a beautiful winged insect, was interpreted as a hint to man of the new existence, and the name of the butterfly (*Psyche*) was used by the Greeks to designate the soul. With the rise of this dogma, the belief in the frequent divine visits to earth began to wane. Jehovah, in a human form, walked, talked,

ate, and wrestled frequently with the patriarchs : in the time of Moses, he manifested himself only on rare occasions and in an entirely different method : and by the time of Isaiah he had changed again. Pausanias, a heathen, who wrote in the first half of the second century, A. D., said : " The men of those ancient days, on account of their righteousness and piety, were on terms of hospitality with the gods and their companions at the board, and when they acted uprightly they openly received honor from the gods, just as they were also visited with anger, if they committed any iniquity. And then also they who are still honored in this manner, became gods instead of men. Thus also, we can believe that a Lycaon was transformed into a beast, and Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus, into a stone. But in my time, when vice has reached its loftiest summit, and has spread itself abroad over the whole country and in all cities, no one has passed from man to god, except only in name and out of flattery to power, and the anger of the gods arises at evil more tardily, and is not executed on men till after they have left this world. And much which used in former times to take place, and which happens even now, those persons which have mixed falsehood with truth, have rendered incredible to the multitude." When men began to deny the divine interposition in human affairs in their own time, they soon began to doubt whether all those ancient records of the adventures of the gods on earth were not mere fables. " The atheistic philosophers " says Dionysius Halicarnassus, " if those persons deserve the name of philosophers, who scoff at all the appearances of the gods, which have taken place among the Greeks and the barbarians, would deduce all these histories from the trickery of man, and turn them into ridicule, as if none of the gods ever cared for any man ; but he who does not deny the gods a providential care over men, but believes that the gods are benevolent to the good, and angry against evil men, will not judge these appearances to be incredible."

The desertion of the national God of Judea for a universal God, who looks with equal favor on men, came at a comparatively late day. Three centuries and a half before Paul, Alexander had united all the countries of western Asia under his sceptre, and this dominion with the oppor-

tunities which it gave to his soldiers to see the superstitions of the Babylonians, Hindoos, Jews, Egyptians and Phœnicians could not but place the absurdity of their exclusive systems in a strong light. After the downfall of the Grecian empire, the Romans came with a still greater dominion. It would have been singular, indeed, if, under these circumstances, no teacher had arisen to attempt to establish in all parts of the great empire the doctrine that there was but one God, and that he looked upon all his earthly children with equal favor. Had a teacher risen in some semi-barbarous tribe, such as the Israelites are represented to have been in time of Samuel, when they had no intercourse with foreigners, but hated them all bitterly, and looked upon Jehovah as one of many divinities, who had an especial favor for them, and to whom, in return, they rendered an exclusive worship—if a teacher had risen in such a tribe to teach a universal God and a form-free religion, we might be surprised ; but not in Judea, in the time of the Cesars, when all the ancient forms of faith were losing their credit, and when the people generally were ready to receive such a creed as Paul taught.

§ 86. The priests monopolised all the learning in the early ages, and were the discoverers of the art of writing. As they were the ministers of the Gods, they were supposed to know the divine will. Their ordinances were of divine authority. Their writing was miraculous to the eyes of the astonished barbarian, who saw bones, leaves and skins which could speak : and the sacredness of the writing was transferred from the mysterious character to the matter recorded with it. All scripture was sacred once ; many nations had no uninspired books ; history, poetry, proverbs, laws, love-songs—all were from the hand of God. As the productions of a God were much more revered than those of a man, the ancient lawgivers generally asserted that their laws had been dictated by the Gods : and this conduct was generally approved even by those, who fully understood the deception.

§ 87. The idea of a God-begotten child might, and did arise in two ways. Girls, and more especially the women employed in the temples, who had consecrated their maidenhood to their divinity, found it very convenient, if they dis-

covered themselves in the family-way, to declare that they had been impregnated by a God. Such assertions made in the times, when Jupiter and Apollo were still the popular deities, and when the fables of their amorous adventures were received with universal faith, appeared probable enough in themselves, and no one could, or would prove them to be untrue. In some cases, a great genius was thought to show such transcendent powers that he could not be entirely of mortal parentage. The mortal maternity could not well be evaded ; but human paternity never could be proved, and sometimes was denied.

§ 88. The Biblical glorification of David, and the prophetic promise that the throne should belong to his family forever, was, if we consider all the circumstances, natural enough. Nothing was more probable than that a usurper should desire the priests to prophesy the perpetuity of his dynasty—a prophecy which might have much influence to secure its own fulfilment : and the priests would not be likely to deny the request of a powerful monarch—when the grant of it could do them personally no harm ; for there was no probability that their prophecy could be falsified in their own generation. It was natural too, that David should be represented in a later age as the especial favorite of Jehovah. His dynasty was still on the throne—to glorify him was to flatter and please his royal descendants. Besides as his reign had been the most glorious in the annals of the nation, it was but reasonable to presume that he had been the greatest favorite of a deity, who was supposed to reward and punish virtue and vice in this world, with the abundance of material prosperity, or the bitterness of misery.

§ 89. The New Testament doctrine of passive submission, absurd and impolitic as it would be for us, in this age, was natural and even necessary for Jesus and the apostles. The Messiah, expected by the Jews, was to lead them to revolt against the foreign oppressor, reestablish the independence of the nation, and elevate it to its ancient splendor. The Romans, acquainted with this Jewish expectation of a Messiah, and the character attributed to him, would naturally keep a sharp look-out and be ready to seize any one who should assume that name. Resistance

to the Roman power was the height of folly : the only safety lay in the most abject submission. No ordinary denial of treasonable intention, on the part of a man claiming to be the Messiah, could satisfy the Romans : their confidence could be gained only by a declaration made with extraordinary solemnity. This solemnity might be attained by laying down the religious principles that all persons in authority hold their positions by the selection of the Deity, that any resistance to them is sinful, and that all kinds of injustice must be submitted to in peace. We may doubt whether Jesus enunciated these principles : but his so-called apostles certainly did and they were under the influence of the same motives.

Among the numerous priests were many devout and good men, who gave their lives to study and left valuable writings. These were sifted and the best points adopted by later writers. In this manner it was, I imagine, that the New Testament contains so many passages which please the contemplative, serious, devout man—such as “the kingdom of God is within you”, &c. These were not composed by Jesus and the Apostles, but were compiled from a multitude of writers.

If there be any sublime dogmas in Christianity, which might be supposed to be too grand or mysterious to have had their origin in the human mind, the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement, are certainly among the chief of these. And yet these, we know, are among the first portions of the system which are discarded by independent thinkers. Besides, they are not only older than Jesus, but we know, beyond a doubt, that they are older than the time of Moses; and no reasonable theory has ever been offered for explaining how, if true, Moses rejected them, and Jesus or his Apostles failed to state the manner in which they were first communicated from heaven to men. The whole tone of the New Testament, in so far as it offers these dogmas at all, is to offer them as original. If there be anything in the language of the New Testament which may seem to shew a superhuman authorship, let the reader turn to Plato, Epictetus, Socrates, Confucius and the books of the Buddhists, and he will find ideas not less sublime, and expressions not less devout.

When Abraham migrated from his native land and settled in Canaan, Jehovah became a family-god to the patriarch, who should, according to the customs of those times, have selected some other family-god, if Jehovah had not offered himself. Laban had his family-gods, and Rachel carried them off with her, when Jacob fled from the house of his father-in-law (*Gen. XXXI. 30*). When the descendants of Abraham had grown to be more numerous than their masters, and when no doubt, they would naturally have thought of throwing off an oppressive yoke, *then* their God ordered them to leave Egypt. When they had become an independent nation, and when it was necessary that they should have a code of laws for their government, and when sensible men among them must have occupied their minds with the formation of such a code, *then* Jehovah gave them laws. When all the people of Western Asia believed in the immediate divine administration of earthly affairs, *then* Moses taught that doctrine by divine revelation. When the majority of the Jews had learned the dogma of the soul's immortality from surrounding heathen nations, *then* Jesus came "to bring life and immortality to light". When the whole known world was comprised under one dominion, and that the dominion of a nation which was not priest-ridden : when the skeptical philosophy of Socrates, Anaxagoras, Epicurus, Plato and Aristotle—for all these were skeptics towards the popular religions of their age—had circulated throughout the universal empire for centuries : when the pretensions of the different petty nations of Western Asia to be the exclusive favorites of the deity had become matter of ridicule to reflecting men generally, *then* Paul appeared and taught that all men were alike before God. Jehovah waited until heathen philosophers had exploded the superstitions to which in earlier ages he had lent his countenance. After men had cleared away the difficulties, he was willing to step in and claim the credit of teaching a new truth ! Unfortunately for the claims of Jehovah, we know that these "new truths", as he calls them, were familiar to learned men, while they were tearing down the superstitions which prevented their reception, and long before the work of demolition was so far advanced that Jehovah ventured to promulgate his only saving doctrines.

We might expect that a religious system, which had a miraculous origin, should also be protected from corruption by supernatural influence. Such protection, Christianity certainly had not in former centuries, and has not in our own. Its corruptions are universally admitted. As it was conceived and taught and extensively received in a natural manner, so it was corrupted and maintained, and so it will, at last, like other superstitions, be discarded, hated, and despised.

CHAPTER XVI.

BIBLICAL MIRACLES.

“Were miracles really indispensable for religious improvement and consolation, heaven forbid there should be any limits to our credulity”.—R. W. MACKAY.

§ 90. The testimony upon which the Hebrew prophets and Christian apostles relied for the proof of their divine mission, and for the proof of their doctrines, was that derived from the miracles which they wrought. When Moses was sent to the enslaved Hebrews, he was directed by Jehovah to perform miracles in proof of his divine authority (*Ex. IV. 8. 9*), and this was the only kind of testimony to which he ever appealed for the truth of his teachings, during the period of forty years that he was the political chief, and moral and religious instructor of his tribe. All the prophets considered miraculous power as the proper and chief testimony of their Jehovistic commission, and the apostles of Jesus held a similar opinion. Throughout the Old and New Testament, the alleged miracles are invariably referred to as the most important confirmation of the truth of their doctrines. Jesus said “The works which I do in my Father’s name—they bear witness of me” (*John*

X. 25). And when he endeavored to convert the inhabitants of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, he offered no testimony save miracles (*Mat. XI. 20-24*). Until the middle of the last century, all the apologists of Christianity appealed to miracles as their chief testimony : and Paley, in his *Evidences*, rested his case on that testimony alone. Of late, the reports of miracles have been received with great distrust, and the advocates of the Bible make less reference to them now than formerly, but still bring them forward occasionally. If, however, the Christians should not produce their alleged miracles as proof of their Scriptures, then the freethinkers would insist on having them brought forward as proof of the falsehood of Christianity. In this chapter, I propose not only to deny the validity of the testimony offered, but to expose the dishonesty implied in the offer.

§ 91. *What is a miracle ?* The writers of the Bible understood a "miracle" to mean a wonderful, or an unusual event. The prophets and apostles had no conception of natural laws. For them all, the usual phenomena of nature were providential—done by the immediate hand of a personal God. The miraculous differed from the providential only as a rarity : there was for them nothing improbable in the nature of the miracle, much less incredible, or impossible. Everything occurred in accordance with the all-ruling and immediately-operating will of Jehovah : and as much exertion of the divine will and power was required to let the sun go on, as to let him stop. A deity upon whom every event in the universe is as directly dependent as the motions of the figures, in a puppet-show, on the man who pulls the wires—a deity who came down to earth repeatedly, and commissioned men to teach his doctrines—such a deity might be expected to perform miracles : in fact, if such a deity were to be discovered now, he would be a miracle himself. When we examine the reported miracles of the Bible, however, we find that they are inconsistent with the laws of nature, as we understand them. The stoppage of the sun, the changing of a stick into a serpent, the creation of toads, and lice, and locusts by a word, the instantaneous cure of blindness and lameness, without resort to any of the means known to medical art—all these are among the

reported miracles of the Bible, and all are inexplicable by the laws of nature, as we understand them. And the appeal to them as proof of supernatural power requires us to look upon them as what we would call violations of the laws of nature : for if they were done in accordance with those laws, they would prove no more than natural power, and could not honestly be brought forward as evidence of a divine commission. Locke, Hume, and Johnson, in the last century, understood the Biblical miracles to be alleged violations of the laws of nature, and so I shall treat them here.

§ 92. *What testimony may suffice to prove a miracle?* To this question it is difficult to give a precise answer. No man now living has ever seen a miracle ; and it is difficult for any one to say what he should do, if he were placed in an entirely new position. That a very considerable amount of testimony would be required, every sensible man will admit. If a witness in court were to testify that a certain person, in comfortable circumstances, in robust health, and of regular habits, had eaten his breakfast every morning during a certain week, when the witness had an opportunity of observing him, the testimony would be listened to without surprise, and believed without hesitation. But if the witness were to testify that the person in question ate two hundred pounds of ten-penny nails for breakfast, every morning during a week, the testimony would be listened to with surprise and incredulity. But why should people believe in one case and not in the other ? Because one statement agrees with our experience, and the other does not. In regard to the latter statement, we must believe either that the man ate the nails, or that the witness lies ; and it is as much within our experience that men do lie, as that they do not eat nails.

Testimony is of various degrees of strength. Human testimony increases in weight with the number and general respectability of the witnesses, and the perceptible force of the motives which should lead them to speak the truth. The testimony which should suffice to convince us that a man was in the habit of eating two hundred pounds of nails for breakfast, would have to come either from a great number of witnesses, or from several known to be educated, sen-

sible, truthful, to have carefully scrutinized the alleged wonder, and to have no motive, in this case, for testifying falsely. The oaths of a dozen men, of whom we know nothing, except from the contents of their affidavits, would not suffice, and he who should offer them as conclusive proof would be considered either dishonest or unwise. Men naturally ask for the best testimony which can be had before believing any wonderful story. In the case of a sensible phenomena, the best testimony is to be found in the senses of each individual man. There is nothing so satisfactory as the evidence of one's own eyes.

If the evidence of the senses cannot be had, and if human testimony be offered to prove a miraculous event, then the investigator must weigh the testimony according to probabilities as observed in his experience. He has no other resource. "Though experience * be our only guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact, it must be acknowledged that this guide is not altogether infallible, but in some cases may lead us into errors. One who, in our climate, should expect better weather in the first week of June than in the first week of March, would reason justly and conformably to experience; but it is certain that he may happen in the event to find himself mistaken. However, we may observe, that in such a case, he would have no cause to complain of experience, for it informed him beforehand of the uncertainty, by that contrariety of events which he might have learned from a diligent observation. All effects follow not with like certainty from their supposed causes. Some events are found in all countries and in all ages to have been constantly conjoined together; others are found to have been more variable, and sometimes to disappoint our expectations, so that in reasoning concerning matters of fact, there are all imaginable degrees of assurance, from the highest certainty to the lowest species of moral evidence. A wise man, therefore, proportions his belief to the evidence. In such conclusions as are founded on an infallible experience, he expects the event with the last degree of assurance, and regards his past experience as a full proof of the future existence of that event. In other cases, he proceeds with more caution: he weighs the oppo-

* HUME. Essay on Miracles.

site experiments : he considers which side is supported by the greater number of experiments—to that side he inclines, with doubt and hesitation ; and when at last he fixes his judgment, the evidence exceeds not what we properly call probability. All probability, then, supposes an opposition of experiments and observations, where one side is found to overbalance the other, and to produce a degree of evidence proportioned to the superiority. A hundred instances or experiments on one side, and fifty on another, afford a doubtful expectation of any event ; though a hundred uniform experiments, with only one that is contradictory, reasonably beget a pretty strong degree of assurance. In all cases, we must balance the opposite experiments, where they are opposite, and deduct the smaller number from the greater, in order to know the exact force of the superior evidence.

* * * * *

“ The plain consequence is (and it is a general maxim of much value to guide us in forming our opinions of all wonderful tales,) that no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavors to establish ; and even in that case there is a mutual destruction of arguments, and the superior only gives us an assurance suitable to that degree of force which remains after deducting the inferior. When any one tells me that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself, whether it be more probable that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact which he relates should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the other, and according to the superiority which I discover, I pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates, then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion.”

This is the only safe method of reasoning upon probabilities : and it is on such principles of probability that evidence is treated in courts of law. It is, however, as before remarked, in the very nature of probability to differ from certainty, which a man may be said to have when he sees a thing with his own eyes. A man who reasons in the

most careful and judicious manner, from probabilities, may err. Thus Locke relates that "it happened to a Dutch ambassador who was entertaining the king of Siam with the particularities of Holland, which the monarch was very inquisitive after, among other things told him that the water in his country, would sometimes in cold weather, be so hard, that men walked upon it, and it would bear an elephant, if he were there. To which the king replied, 'Hitherto I have believed the strange things you have told me, because I looked upon you as a sober fair man; but now, I know, you lie.'" But the king reasoned wisely though he rejected the truth, and he deserved much more respect than if he had implicitly believed, with equally ready faith, those tales which accorded with his experience and those which did not. If I meet an acquaintance in comfortable circumstances, good health, and regular mode of life, who tells me at noon that he has eaten breakfast, I believe him without hesitation: and if I afterwards discover that he lied to me, that will not show that I acted injudiciously in believing him.

"In a word, * to submit our belief implicitly and indifferently to the mere force of authority in all cases, whether miraculous or natural, without any rule of discerning the credible from the incredible, might support indeed the faith as it is called, but would certainly destroy the use of all history, by leading us into perpetual errors, and possessing our minds with invincible prejudices and false notions both of men and things. But to distinguish between things totally different from each other, between miracle and nature, the extraordinary acts of God and the ordinary transactions of man, to suspend our belief of the one, while, on the same testimony, we grant it freely to the other, and to require a different degree of evidence for each in proportion to the different degrees of their credibility, is so far from hurting the credit of history, or of anything else which we ought to believe, that it is the only way to purge history from its dross, and to render it beneficial to us, and by a right use of our reason and judgment, to raise our minds above the low prejudices and childish superstitions of the credulous vulgar."

* Dr. CONYERS MIDDLETON.

§ 93. *Were the miracles reported in the Bible actually wrought?* The Christian will answer in the affirmative, and in support of them say that the testimony of the word of God is sufficient. But we are now considering whether the Bible is the word of God, and whether the miracles prove it to be so. If the miracles are to prove the inspiration, it will not do to make the inspiration prove them. They must be examined precisely on the same principles as we would examine similar stories in profane books. The witnesses of the miracles recorded in the four Gospels, are at most four; and two of these, Mark and Luke, it is generally admitted, were not eye-witnesses of any of the miracles of Jesus. The books known by their names, do not claim that the authors were eye-witnesses of the events recorded. Then we are reduced to two witnesses, Matthew and John, and if we receive their testimony as of no higher authority than that of men generally, we must reject the accounts of the miracles at once: and if we receive them as of higher authority, we presumptuously decide in advance the question at issue—whether they deserve to be considered as of higher authority. If a dozen priests in Mexico were to publish an account of a miracle done in their presence, would any enlightened man believe them? Would a sensible man think seriously of believing them? Yet, why are they not as worthy of belief as the twelve apostles? When we read of the miracles wrought by the relics of saints, and idols of the Virgin, in Catholic countries, do we imagine for a moment that there is any truth in them? Does it matter to us that ten thousand, or a hundred thousand pious, simple-hearted pilgrims have gone, and seen, and went away believing? No; trusting to our experience of the dishonesty of priests, and the credulity of the people, we conclude at once, that there is an imposture, and that there is no violation of the laws of nature. The fact is, as confessed by Dr. Arnold, * Christians believe the Biblical miracles only on the testimony of the Bible, as a book of divine authority; and, of course, they cannot turn about, and prove the divine authority by the miracles, without being guilty of reasoning in a circle. Thus, the miraculous proof of Christianity vanishes in smoke, and instead of it we have Biblical proof of mira-

* Edinburgh Review, No. 174.

cles, which will also vanish in smoke, if I mistake not, before we are done with it.

Before examining the particular miracles recorded in the Bible, let us look a little farther at the kind of testimony which we should have to prove a miracle. If a personal god should see fit to give a revelation for the benefit of all mankind, we might anticipate that he would put it forth in such a shape that it should appear true to every man, we might expect that he would furnish proof of its truth as clear to one man as to another : and in every case the best evidence possible. In courts of law, the judge always demands the best evidence which can be had : he will never take hearsay testimony when he can get that of eye-witnesses. What the jury can see with their own eyes, they are not permitted to see through the eyes of others. And in the case of miracles, it is evident that the only entirely satisfactory evidence can be that of each one's own senses. Until we have that evidence there can be room for doubt : after that, there can be none. "A miracle is no miracle at second-hand." But we find that the Bible puts us off with hearsay testimony. Divine truth ought to be as precious to me as it was to the ancient Jews : I ought to be as precious to Jehovah as they were : yet he gave them the testimony of their senses, and tells me to be satisfied with their tales of his doings.

If we must take hearsay testimony then to prove an event contrary to all our experience, we should demand that the witness understood the nature of the events, scrutinized them with a care corresponding to their wonderful character, and shows in his testimony that he took such care, by reporting such particulars, as a careful investigator should make himself familiar with. But we find that in the Bible no particulars are recorded : we have not one special day or month of a solitary alleged miracle : in many cases we have not the name of a single witness. Again we find that the writers of the Bible had no conception of the impossibility or improbability of miracles : they supposed that miracles were done every day : they were credulous, and ready to believe assertions which we should only laugh at. They believed that witches, sorcerers, and bad men could work miracles: Their belief was the com-

mon belief of that age : and we know that people in general then supposed miracles to be an almost every day occurrence. Indeed, not comprehending the operation of inviolable natural laws, they did not see the absurdity of reports of their violation. At that time, the most learned men were incompetent to form clear ideas of the weight of testimony. If a man solemnly asserted that he had seen a priest raise a dead man to life, his assertion was considered sufficient proof of the event, because everybody at that time believed in the power of working miracles and in the daily occurrence of special providences. It is only by education that a man learns to judge of probabilities. A child can be induced to believe almost anything, and the men of ancient times—many even of the most intelligent—were but children as compared with the men of this age. The Emperor Julian, one of the earliest writers against Christianity, did not deny the miracles of Christ, because he did not doubt them. The books of Moses gravely tell us that the Egyptian priests changed their rods by a word into serpents ; and another biblical writer says that the Witch of Endor raised the dead Samuel from his grave and caused him to speak to Saul.

In trying cases before courts of law, a witness, in whom much trust is reposed, must not only be intelligent, but he must be subjected to a cross-examination. But the witnesses of the New Testament were not, and cannot be, cross-examined ; and we are asked to believe implicitly the testimony taken down by one of the parties. People may take such testimony in theology, but in a court of law it would be promptly rejected.

It is a singular fact, if the Biblical miracles were wrought as reported, that there are no miracles now-a-days, and, in fact, that there never have been any which have come under the immediate observation of great historians or philosophers. Plato, Tacitus, Thucydides and Herodotus do not report anything incredible to modern skepticism, as having been observed by themselves ; nor do Grote, Gibbon or Hume give credit to any tales of miraculous events in their respective histories. Wherever the people are ignorant and superstitious, there, according to report, miracles are abundant ; but wherever there are learned and skeptical men,

miracles disappear, or if there be any reports of miracles, they are looked upon as tricks to cheat the ignorant. "Whatever* be the uncertainty of ancient history, there is one thing at least which we may certainly learn from it—that human nature has been always the same; agitated by the same appetites and passions, and liable to the same excesses and abuses of them in all ages and countries of the world; so that our experience of what passes in the present age will be the best comment on what is delivered to us as concerning the past. To apply it, then, to the case before us: there is hardly a single fact [fraudulent miracle] which I have charged upon the primitive times, but what we still see performed in one or other of the sects of Christians [Mormons, Spiritualists, etc.] of even our own times. Among some, we see diseases cured, devils cast out, and all the other miracles which are said to have been wrought in the primitive Church; among others, we see the boasted gifts of Tertullians' and Cyprian's days, pretended revelations, prophetic visions and divine impressions. Now, all these modern pretensions we readily ascribe to their true cause, to the artifices and craft of a few, playing upon the credulity, the superstition and the enthusiasm of the many, for the sake of some private interest. When we read, therefore, that the same things were performed by the ancients, and for the same ends of acquiring a superiority of credit, or wealth, or power, over their fellow-creatures, how can we possibly hesitate to impute them to the same cause of fraud or imposture?"

We shall now make a brief mention of some of the Biblical reports of miracles, confining our attention chiefly to those recorded in the New Testament.

The report of the arrest of the sun at Joshua's command to permit him to kill the Amorites (*Josh. X. 12–14*), has no title to credence. Such an event could not have happened without a record being made of it in China, Persia, India, and Egypt—countries where astronomy was studied, where observations were taken, and where records were preserved, but where no record is to be found of this miracle. The writer of the book of *Joshua* evidently had no idea of the nature of such a miracle, or he would have explained how

* Dr. MIDDLETON.

it happened that no damage was done by a sudden stoppage of the earth in her rotation—such a stoppage, as if it were to happen now, would destroy the human race and all their works. Yet, we know that there are buildings standing in Egypt which were erected before the alleged time of Joshua. Besides, the book of *Joshua* quotes the book of *Jasher* as authority for the report of the miracle, but the latter book was not written until the time of the Kings.

Joshua stopped the sun ; but Isaiah compelled that luminary to turn round and travel backward for more than half an hour in time, and ten degrees in distance, (*Is. XXXVIII. 7, 8 ; 2 K., XX. 8–11*). This miracle is reported to have happened only 700 years before Christ ; but it wants the confirmation which it would have had, if true, in the records of China, Hindostan, Egypt and Greece.

Matthew (*IV. 18, 19*) and Mark (*I. 16–20*) say that Jesus selected Peter as an apostle while the latter was fishing in the sea of Galilee. Luke (*V. 1–11*) tells of the calling, and *adds* a miraculous draught of fishes. John (*XXI. 2*) makes another addition of a miraculous fire to cook the fish, and he also changes the date of the event, and makes it happen after the resurrection. John wrote after Luke, and Luke after Mark and Matthew. Hennell remarks that “ In such instances the gradual enhancement is very different from wilful falsehood, since the additional particulars doubtless seemed no less probable in themselves than edifying to the Church.” It has been by some writers supposed, that the Evangelists referred to different miracles, but that supposition is contradicted by the similarity of the circumstances as related by the different authors. The scene was at the Sea of Galilee: Peter, James and John were present ; they were fishing ; Jesus promised that Peter should fish for men ; the fishermen forsook all to follow him ; when Jesus came they had nothing ; and Jesus commanded the casting of the net.

Matthew (*III. 16,*) and Mark (*I. 10,*) say that when John baptized Jesus, he saw the spirit descending like a dove. Luke (*III. 22*) says that the spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove. John (*I. 32*) adds, that this had been foretold by John the Baptist.

The miracle of turning water into wine, at the marriage

in Cana, is reported only by John (*II. 1*), though "it did manifest forth the glory" of Jesus. John says "When they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him—'They have no wine.'" On this, Hennell observes that "There is no reason why Jesus should be applied to for wine, which it was the duty of the host to furnish; but however unnatural the application in reality, it was quite natural on the part of the writer who was to prepare the way for the event." Yet even after this miracle, Jesus' relatives, who were present, did not believe on him.

Matthew says (*VIII. 15*) that Christ healed Peter's wife's mother, and "the fever left her, and she arose and ministered unto them." Mark says (*I. 31*), "immediately the fever left her and she ministered unto them". Luke (*IV. 38, 39*) says: "it was a great fever", and "immediately she arose and ministered unto them". "Now, the variations", as Hennell remarks, "though perhaps made innocently, are important; for the reality of the miracle depends upon the greatness of the fever and upon the patient's exhibiting immediately some visible sign of recovery, such as rising."

The miracle of the casting out of the demons loses nothing in its progress. Matthew (*VIII. 16*), says "They brought unto him *many* that were possessed with demons; and he cast out the spirits with his word, and cured all that were sick." Mark says (*I. 32*), "They brought unto him *all* that were diseased, and them that were possessed with demons, *and all the city was gathered together at the door*, and he healed *many* that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many demons, and suffered *not* the demons to speak, because they knew him." Now hear Luke (*IV. 40*), "*All* they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him, and he laid hands on *every one* of them, and healed them, and demons also came out of many, crying out and saying: 'Thou art Christ, the Son of God'; and he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak, for they knew that he was Christ." Luke's story is clearly marked by the characteristics of priestly fraud.

In *Matthew (IX. 2-8)*, a miraculous cure of palsy is related. Christ said to the afflicted man: "'Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thy house': and he arose and de-

parted to his house." Mark says (*II. 12*), "And *immediately* he arose, took up the bed and went forth *before them all*." Luke (*V. 25*), says "And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, *glorifying God*."

Matthew (*XIV. 15-22*), Mark (*VI. 37-44*) Luke (*IX. 12*), and John (*VI. 11*) tell of a miraculous feeding of five thousand persons ; and in *Matthew* (*XV. 38*), and *Mark* (*VIII. 9*), it is said that four thousand persons were miraculously fed. These accounts are evidently confused reports of the same tradition or event. That the same event is referred to is clear, because the narratives agree with each other in the order of the speeches and events, and nearly of words ; because, according to the latter story, the actors do not remember the first miracle, but ask—"Whence have we bread in the wilderness to satisfy so great a multitude?" and Jesus, in his answer, shows a like unconsciousness of any similar occurrence ; because the event occurred near the sea of Galilee in each case ; and because after each miracle, Jesus sends the multitude away, and passes over the sea. Matthew and Mark evidently thought that there were two separate miracles (*XVI. 9. 10.*), (*Mark VIII. 19. 20*), while, according to John (*VI. 26, 30-32*), both Jesus and the people speak as though there had been no miracle.

Matthew (*VIII. 5*), and Luke (*VII. 1-10*), relate the circumstances of a miraculous cure of a Centurion's servant. John relates a similar cure of the son of a nobleman or ruler. All say the event happened at Capernaum soon after the Sermon on the Mount, and relate the miracle in similar terms, and ascribe nearly the same words to Jesus. Everything goes to show that the Evangelists referred to the same event or report. Matthew describes the sick person in Greek as a *pais* or boy. Luke supposed the boy to be a servant, and called him *doulos*, a servant : and John supposed the boy to be a son, and called him *vios*, a son.

Mark (*X. 46-52*) relates the miraculous and immediate cure of a blind man by Jesus, while the latter was going *from* Jericho. Luke (*XVIII. 35*) tells of a cure of a blind man while Jesus was going *to* Jericho. John (*IX. 6-11*) adds, that the miracle was not immediate, and that the man

did not see till he had gone to the pool of Siloam. Matthew has two miraculous cures of two blind men (*IX. 27, XX. 30*), in the place of Mark's one cure of one blind man. The expressions and incidents are so similar that they must have been confused accounts of the same legend.

Matthew tells (*XVII. 18*) of the miraculous and immediate cure of a lunatic ; but Mark (*IX. 25*), says the cure was not immediate.

The barren fig tree, cursed by Christ, withered immediately according to Matthew (*XXI, 19*), but Mark says it was found withered the next day.

John says there was a voice from Heaven (*XII. 28. 29*), but some thought it was thunder.

Matthew (*IX. 18*), Mark (*V. 22*), and Luke (*VIII. 41*), record the recall of Jairus' daughter to life. These three authors admit that they were not present, but say that John was there. He, however, says nothing about it in his evangel.

The miracle of recalling the dead Lazarus to life, as narrated by John (*XI. 43*), was the most splendid of all the miracles. The writer does not profess to have been present on the occasion, and the narrative is indirectly contradicted by Matthew (*XX. 29-XXI. 1*) and Mark (*X. 46-XI. 1*) and Luke (*XIX. 1-37*). Hennell says "Neither Matthew, Mark, nor Luke appear to have had any knowledge of the affair ; for they are not only silent concerning it, but their accounts do not easily admit of its introduction. John puts the supper at which Lazarus sat after his resurrection, one day before the public entry into Jerusalem. But Matthew, as well as Mark and Luke, makes it appear that Jesus made his entry into Jerusalem on coming direct from Jericho, a distance of about twenty miles ; and that after this he took up his abode at Bethany. John's story of Lazarus requires, therefore, another previous abode at Bethany, which breaks in violently upon the order of events in Matthew, whose narrative seems to exclude the possibility of Jesus having already resided for some time so near to Jerusalem as fifteen furlongs (see *Mat. XIX. 1 : XX. 18. 29 ; XXI. 1*). The supper at Bethany also is related by Matthew long after the entrance, although he is not precise as to the date (*XXVI. 6*). This supper is

proved to be the same one at which John says Lazarus was present, by the alabaster box of ointment, and the speech of Judas for the poor. Yet Matthew and Mark seem quite ignorant of that which John says attracted the Jews—the presence of the revived Lazarus. The story of Lazarus seems again to be forced upon the attention of the first three Evangelists, when they relate the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, and the conduct of the multitude ; for John says that the people bare record of his having raised Lazarus. But here, also, they make not the slightest allusion to it. It is impossible to conceive any plausible reason for this concealment, when the same three Evangelists appear so willing to relate all the miracles they were acquainted with, and actually relate some that were said to be done in secret. That they had all forgotten this miracle so completely, that it did not once occur to them whilst relating the connected circumstances, cannot be imagined ; and if any miracle deserved a preference in the eyes of narrators disposed to do honor to Christ, or even to give a faithful account of him, it was this. The *Acts* and the *Epistles* nowhere allude to this story, although it would have afforded Paul a very good instance of the resurrection of the body (1 *Cor.* XV. 35). The first mention, therefore, of the most public and decisive of the miracles, appears in a writing published at Ephesus, sixty years afterwards—a distance both of time and place, which rendered it easy to publish fictitious statements without fear of contradiction.”

F. W. Newman remarks on this miracle, “John wrote fifty or sixty years after the events ; when the other disciples were all dead ; when Jerusalem was destroyed, her priests and learned men dispersed, her nationality dissolved, her coherence annihilated ;—he wrote in a tongue foreign to the Jews of Palestine, and for a foreign people, in a distant country, and in the bosom of an admiring and confiding church, which was likely to venerate him the more, the greater marvels he asserted concerning their Master. He told them miracles of first-rate magnitude, which none before had recorded. Is it possible for me to receive them on his word, under circumstances so conducive to delusion, and without a single check to ensure his veracity ?”

The transfiguration of Christ is mentioned by Matthew

(*XVII. 2*), *Mark (IX. 2)*, and *Luke (IX. 28)*, but neither one of these was present, while John, who is reported to have been present, says nothing of it. The three Evangelists, who speak of the transfiguration, say that Jesus cautioned those present to keep the event a secret.

Matthew's story (*XXVII. 63*), of the guard at the tomb of Jesus bears the mark of fiction. The Pharisees are made to say :—"We remember that deceiver said while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again." From *John (XX. 9)*, it appears that Jesus never said so even to his disciples. The guard story is not alluded to in any other portion of the New Testament. The disciples did not expect a resurrection (*Luke XXIV. 11* ; *Mark XVI. 11* ; *John XX. 29* ; *Matthew XXVIII. 17*), and how should the Pharisees? "That the guard," remarks Greg, "placed by the Sanhedrim at the tomb, all trembling with affright from the apparition (*Mat. XXVIII. 4*), should have been at once, and so easily persuaded to deny the vision, and propagate a lie ;—that the Sanhedrim, instead of angrily and contemptuously scouting the story of the soldiers, charging them with having slept, and threatening them with punishment, should have believed their statement, and, at the same time, in full conclave, resolved to bribe them into silence and falsehood ;—that Roman soldiers, who could scarcely commit a more heinous offense than to sleep upon their post, should so willingly have accepted money to accuse themselves of such a breach of duty—all these are suppositions, too improbable to be readily allowed—especially when the 13th verse indicates subsequent Jewish rumor as the foundation of the story, and when the utter silence of all the other Evangelists and Apostles respecting a narrative which, if true, would be so essential a feature in their preaching of the resurrection, is duly borne in mind."

In giving his last blessing to his disciples, Jesus said that "these signs shall follow them that believe ; * * * they shall speak with new tongues" (*Mark XVI. 7*). In accordance with this promise, we find that the twelve apostles, after the ascension, were gifted with a familiar knowledge of all languages "under heaven" (*Acts II. 1-12*). Neither did the miracle cease immediately, for many years later Paul wrote, "divers kinds of tongues" were "given by

the Spirit to the members of the church (1. *Cor. XII. 10*) The miraculous communication of foreign languages would have been of great practical benefit to apostles who were to preach the Gospel to all the world, and it was such a miracle as might be expected, if any were wrought. Of course, we are to presume that if Jehovah were to communicate a language by inspiration, it would be given so as to be used with propriety, accuracy, and ease. If such miraculous communication had been made to any of the followers of Jesus, we might presume that it would be made to the Evangelists and Apostles, who were inspired not only to preach the gospel, but also to make a permanent record of it. But when we come to examine the Greek of the New Testament, the language which was the most important to the Apostles, and in which they preached and wrote, we find that it is, as Campbell calls it, 'a barbarous dialect.' "If any one contends," says Erasmus, "that the Apostles were inspired by God, with the knowledge of all tongues, and that this gift was perpetual in them, since everything which is performed by a divine power is more perfect, according to St. Chrysostom, than what is performed either in the ordinary course of nature, or by the pains of man, how comes it to pass that the language of the Apostles is not only rough and unpolished, but imperfect: also confused, and sometimes even plainly solecising and absurd; for we cannot possibly deny what the fact itself declares to be true." Neander confesses that "In the history of the first propagation of Christianity, traces are never found of a supernatural gift for the purpose of spreading the Gospel. Ancient tradition, which names several persons as interpreters of the Apostles, implies the contrary." Gibbon remarks that "The knowledge of foreign languages was frequently communicated to the contemporaries of Irenæus, though Irenæus himself was left to struggle with the difficulties of a barbarous dialect, whilst he preached the Gospel to the natives of Gaul."

Such are the reports of the most important Biblical miracles—bearing their falsehood marked upon their brows. We shall hereafter see (*Ch. XXI.*) that all of the Gospels were written more than thirty years after the death of Jesus, and after the destruction of Jerusalem, when detec-

tion in falsehood had become improbable, if not impossible. "But" asks Heunell "if the reader will still hold the reality of these miracles, to what scheme must he have recourse? That God has caused a deviation from the course of nature for the instruction of mankind, and has left the account of it to be conveyed to them by means which, on the closest examination, occasions it to bear a strong resemblance to human fictions: a supposition so monstrous and perplexing, that notwithstanding the value of the supposed lesson, our minds turn at last from this mode of teaching in weariness, and resolves to be contented to learn where we are sure, at least, that the lessons proceed from God himself—and that is in nature."

I do not imagine that any portion of the four Gospels deserves to be received as historically true, unless it be corroborated by some other authority: and all the reports of miracles and the attendant circumstances are probably mere inventions. Nevertheless, if we receive them as trustworthy narratives, "it is worthy * of especial note, that to the last, in defiance of the numerous, astonishing, and public miracles recorded in the Gospels,—of many of which as the raising of Lazarus, and the cure of the blind man (*John IX.*) the Pharisees and chief men are said to have been witnesses—the incredulity of these Rulers and of the Sanhedrim remained unshaken. It is evident too that it was a sincere and genuine disbelief—not merely a refusal to accept the inference of the divine mission of Christ, on the ground of his miraculous power, but a disbelief in the miraculous power itself—or at least of its being miraculous beyond the tricks of common jugglers. They were *exasperated*, but no way *intimidated*, by the wonders which he wrought before them. Had they really supposed that he could cure the blind, heal the lame, command the spirits, still the waves, raise the dead (in a different manner, and with a different degree and kind of power from their own thaumaturgists)—still more, had they seen any one of these awful evidences of supernatural power—then however, hostile their ambition and selfishness might be to his pretensions, they would have dreaded to provoke his enmity, or to practise against his safety, satisfied as they must have

* GREG. Creed of Christendom.

been, that he could not only foresee and baffle their machinations, but could inflict a fearful retaliation. But we see nothing of all this :—they feared, not him, but the people who were friendly to him : they more than once openly attacked him, and tempted him, even by taunts, to a display of his supernatural gifts :—in a word, their whole conduct shows that his miracles, whatever they were, had not gone any way toward producing in their minds a conviction, or even a fear, of his supernatural power.”

Can we place any faith in these reported miracles of the New Testament, when our only testimony is hearsay, which comes to us from persons who are not known to us to have been eye-witnesses, who were superstitious, and whose books may have been very much corrupted, without our being able to detect it? But if we believe them, then we shall be under obligation to believe a great many other reported miracles, which are much better attested. Nearly every one of the celebrated fathers of the Christian Church previous to the seventh century, recorded or credited a number of miracles. Among those fathers who did so record or credit miracles, were Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Origen, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, Basil, Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, Athenagoras, Eusebius, Augustine, Hesperius, Athanasius, Epiphanius and Theodoret. All of these persons have been honored with the title of Saint by the Catholic Church, among the members of which during their time, they had no superiors in intelligence or ability ; and most of them left writings of importance to show that the Gospel is now preserved as it was in their time. They are persons, whose character and acts are known to us from contemporary history, whereas we know nothing of the Evangelists, save what we find in their own books, or in traditions, which cannot be traced beyond the beginning, and some of them not beyond the end, of the second century. The Christian Fathers, above mentioned, whose works have far better evidence for their genuineness than there are for the evangels, attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, corroborate each other in regard to the power of the Church to perform miracles, and in regard to the frequency of miracles ; and

if these two points be well established, there can be little difficulty about accepting particular miracles. But when the nature of the miracles witnessed by these saints is explained, our faith in both saints and miracles must become faint. Chrysostom, Basil, Jerome, and Augustine, four of the greatest men of the primitive Church, exalt the miraculous power of relics, and it was by these saints as a class, that monkery, the worship of relics, the invocation of saints, prayers for the dead, image worship, the sacraments, the sign of the cross, and the use of consecrated oil were introduced. Gibbon, in the *Decline and Fall* (Ch. XXVIII.) has occasion to say :—"The grave and learned Augustine, whose understanding scarcely admits the excuse of credulity, has attested the innumerable prodigies which were performed in Africa by the relics of St. Stephen ; and this marvellous narrative is inserted in the elaborate work of *The City of God*, which the bishop of Hippo designed as a solid and immortal proof of the truth of Christianity. Augustine solemnly declares that he has selected those miracles only, which were publicly certified by persons who were either the objects or the spectators of the power of the martyr.

* * * The bishop enumerates above seventy miracles, of which three were resurrections from the dead in two years, and within the limits of his own diocese. * * *

The miraculous cure of diseases of the most inveterate or even of preternatural kind, can no longer occasion any surprise, when we recollect that in the days of Irenæus, about the end of the second century, the resurrection of the dead was very far from being considered an uncommon event : that the miracle was frequently performed on necessary occasions, by great fasting and the joint supplication of the church of the place, and that the persons, thus restored to their prayers, had lived afterwards among them many years." In every imaginable respect, the testimony for these miracles of the Fathers is stronger and more trustworthy than for those of Jesus and his Apostles : and yet no intelligent man in a Protestant country thinks of believing them. We are all satisfied that the Fathers lied : and why shall we not believe the same of the Evangelists ?

But the reports of miracles did not cease with the Fathers : we have them to our own time, and why should

there not be miracles as well now as in the time of the Apostles? It is said that their testimony was necessary to establish Christianity, but that such necessity has now passed, and miracles would be superfluous. The Bible speaks of miracles and divinely-inspired prophecies being made every day, or at least frequently, during the whole time covered by the record, more than fifteen hundred years—during a portion of which time the faith of the people in the divine origin of the Church was not less firm than at present. The skeptical tendency of the present age is evident to all intelligent men; the Bible is losing ground every day; and why should not miracles be done to maintain, as well as to build up a creed? Why were there no miracles done in Europe during the French revolution, when twenty millions of enlightened men deserted the Christian Church, and desecrated the temples of the Jehovah with heathen mockeries? But when was Christianity established? It gradually extended from the crucifixion of Christ till the beginning of the last century, when it began to lose ground. There is no place to draw the line short of that. About the year 1700, then, should be considered the date of its establishment, and yet no enlightened person will consent to believe that the power of working miracles existed until the beginning of the eighteenth century. But the New Testament does not authorize any line to be drawn. Jesus is represented to have said, (*Mark XVI. 17, 18*):—"These signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents: and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them: they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." The meaning of this sentence is plain—the miraculous power was to follow the faithful forever; and there is nothing in the New Testament to contradict this interpretation. Stephen, Philip, and Paul, who were neither apostles nor disciples of Christ, performed miracles (*Acts VI. 3, 8. VII. 8. XIII. 11. XIV. 8. XIX. 11*). Why should not miracles be as proper to convert the Chinese and Hindoos of this age, as the Jews or Greeks eighteen centuries ago? Of what benefit to the Asiatic is it that Christianity is established in Europe, if its evidence be not presented in a convincing form to his mind? When we know

that miracles are not wrought in this age, we are very foolish if we believe that they were wrought in any past age.

But if we accept the testimony of the evangelists and apostles to the Biblical miracles, we must reject the contrary testimony of an infinite number of other witnesses : so that not only the miracle destroys the credit of testimony, but the testimony destroys itself. “ To make * this the better understood, let us consider that in matters of religion, whatever is different, is contrary, and that it is impossible the religions of ancient Rome, of Turkey, of Siam, and of China should all of them be established on a solid foundation. Every miracle, therefore, pretended to have been wrought in any of these religions (and all of them abound in miracles), as its direct purpose is to establish the particular system to which it is attributed, so has it the same force, though more indirectly, to overthrow every other system. In destroying a rival system, it likewise destroys the credit of those miracles, on which that system was established : so that all the prodigies of different religions are to be regarded as contrary facts : and the evidences of these prodigies, whether weak, or strong, as opposite to each other. According to this method of reasoning, when we believe any miracle of Mahomet, or his successors, we have for our warrant the testimony of a few barbarous Arabians : and on the other hand we are to regard the authority of Titus Livius, Plutarch, Tacitus, and in short, of all the authors and witnesses, Grecian, Chinese, and Roman Catholic, who have related any miracle in their particular religion—I say, we are to regard their testimony in the same light, as if they had mentioned the Mohammedan miracle, and had, in express terms, contradicted it.” Thus, we have an incalculably great preponderance of witnesses against the alleged miracles of any one creed, and all must fall to the ground together, if we weigh human testimony according to reasonable probabilities.

When † we deny the alleged miracles of the Bible, we deny the divine authority of the book itself. Nothing is left of Christianity that deserves to be revered as truth. Its essence is gone : its evidence is annihilated. Its truths,

* HUME. Essay on Miracles.

† This paragraph is altered from Norton.

involving, as its friends pretend, the highest interests of mankind, the facts which it proclaims, and which would be implied, if it were a divine revelation, rest no longer on the authority of a God, who is distinct from nature. In evidence of those truths, nothing remains but the assertions of a few superstitious priests, whose names, and even the age in which they lived, are matters of grave doubt. It is, indeed, difficult to conjecture, how any one can attach any great value to the teachings of Jesus, after rejecting the belief in his miraculous powers. His whole history, as recorded in the Gospels, is miraculous. It is vain to attempt to strike out what relates directly, or indirectly, to his miraculous authority and works, with the supposition that any coherent, or supremely great truth will remain. Miracles form the substance and groundwork of the narrative, and like the figure of Phidias on Minerva's shield, cannot be erased without spoiling the entire composition. If the accounts of Christ's miracles be mere fictions, then no credit can be due to works so fabulous as the pretended histories of his life. But these supposed miracles, it has been contended, may be explained consistently with the veracity of the reporters as, natural events, the character of which was mistaken by the beholders. At the first glance, it is obvious that such a statement supposes mistakes committed by those beholders, the disciples and apostles of Jesus, hardly consistent with any exercise of intellect : and at the same time renders it very difficult to free his character from the suspicion of intentional fraud. A little farther consideration may satisfy us, that, if Jesus really performed no miracles, the accounts of his life, that have been handed down from his disciples, give evidence of utter folly, or the grossest deception, or rather of both.

§ 94. *What might be proved by the New Testament miracles?* Those acts, reported as miraculous in the New Testament, might prove that the doers had power to do them, or to do other similar acts. The possession of power does not necessarily imply the possession of wisdom. There is no necessary connection between them. Physical power is not dependent upon wisdom or knowledge : and as has already been shown, the biblical authors admitted that wicked men might possess the same miraculous power as

good men. It is generally assumed that the ability to do such acts, as the miracles attributed to Jesus, would prove him to possess supernatural power : but I deny this. Whenever we witness a phenomenon—no matter how singular or wonderful it may appear to us—we are required to believe it to be a natural event, which may not have previously come within our experience. “Reason* must be the judge of what is a miracle, and what is not, which—not knowing how far the power of natural causes do extend themselves, and what strange effects they may produce—is very hard to determine. It will always be as great a miracle that God should alter the course of natural things, as overturn the principles of knowledge and understanding in a man, by setting up anything to be received by him as a truth which his reason cannot assent to, as the miracle itself : and so at best it will be but one miracle against another, and the greater still on reason’s side : it being harder to believe that God should alter and put out of its ordinary course some phenomenon of the great world for once, and make things act contrary to their ordinary rule, purposely that the mind of man might do so always afterwards, than that this is some fallacy or natural effect, of which he knows not the cause, let it look never so strange.” The supernatural is entirely unknown to us : we have no means of recognizing it : its existence is denied by science, and its possibility, as a matter of human knowledge, by philosophy. We can never be certain of knowing all the laws of nature, and until we have such certainty, we cannot know that any given phenomenon is a violation of them. The savage is laughed at who believes a civilized man to be possessed of miraculous power, when he throws a dead body into convulsions with a galvanic battery, or when he, by means of a telescope or a magnetic telegraph, discovers what is going on at a great distance ; yet we bear the same relation to Jesus which the savage bears to civilized man. If Christ were to appear in California and perform all the miraculous acts, ascribed to him in the New Testament, he would acquire little credit for the possession of supernatural power. If he should turn water into wine, he would be called a good juggler ; if he should cure the blind and lame,

* LOCKE. Quoted in King’s Life of him.

and raise the dead, he would be esteemed as an unequalled physician ; if he should cause the heavens to grow dark, he would be accounted a great meteorologist ; if he rose up to heaven, he would have the credit of having invented a flying machine. But as for any pretension of ability to violate the laws of nature—why the thing is ridiculous. If a man were to order the sun to cease forthwith to shine in clear noonday, and if the sun should so forthwith cease to shine, that man would not be entitled to any more credit than the man who can foretell an eclipse. Their powers would be equally miraculous to a man who knows nothing of astronomy. If, however, it be insisted upon that the restoration of a dead man to life suffice to prove miraculous power, then ought not a good juggler's trick, well performed, prove as much ? To breathe fire is as inexplicable by natural laws (as they are understood by educated men generally) as to cure the blind and lame by a word. I have witnessed pieces of legerdemain, at which I am as much puzzled, as I should be at seeing many of the alleged miracles of Jesus. The latter pretends to have supernatural power : the magician does not. The one asks for my money ; the other for my faith, knowing that, if he can get that, he will get my money too. If I reason philosophically, I shall not permit these accompanying declarations to make any difference in my views of acts, which in themselves are similar. If the doings of miracle-worker and juggler be equally wonderful, I shall believe that both have supernatural power or that neither has : and if I have a prepossession in favor of either, it should rather be in favor of the professor of legerdemain ; for his class has never done any noteworthy evil, while the greatest crimes in history have been owing to the priestly workers of miracles.

The Bible—and on this point few Christians have outgrown the Biblical doctrine—assumes that the power of raising the dead would prove supernatural power, and that supernatural power would prove the possession of divine truth. Here are two assumptions founded in no logical connection whatever. But if these assumptions were founded in truth,—if the Biblical miracles were done, and if they sufficed to prove supernatural power, and if supernatural power sufficed to prove the possession of supernatural truth

communicated by immediate divine revelation, and the ability and disposition to communicate that truth in purity, still this miraculous evidence would be highly objectionable. It brings no light to the mind. It assumes that we can discover the divine in a fact, and not in a proposition. It seeks to govern us through our wonder, and not through our reason. It would have us receive the doctrinal truth as a matter of superstition—without any evidence of its beauty, or fitness or logical coherence between its parts, or of corresponding with other truths previously received by us : it would set up a standard of truth before which the reasoning faculties are powerless, and the door is opened to all the debasing notions which prevailed, or prevail in the priest-ridden communities of ancient Egypt, or modern Hindostan. The attempt to convert a man by miracles, as Emerson says, “is a profanation of the soul” : and divinely-commissioned teachers could never resort to it.

CHAPTER XVII.

BIBLICAL PROPHECIES.

“When men became less credulous, the power of the Pythian Oracle vanished”.—CICERO.

§ 95. Akin to the testimony of miracles, and hardly less important among the alleged evidences of Christianity, is that derived from prophecy. The miracles were the strongest proof of the Christian doctrines ; but the prophecies were the strongest proof that Jesus was the Messiah. The evangelists represent Jesus as appealing to passages in the Old Testament which, as he said, “testified” of him (*John V. 39*), and on several occasions he made long discourses on this testimony, expounding the things concerning

himself in all the Scriptures, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets" (*Luke XXIV. 25-27*). Paul, while teaching at Thessalonica, reasoned with the Jews there for three Sabbath days, alleging from the Scriptures "that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that Jesus" was the Messiah (*Acts XVII. 3*). He used no other argument in attempting to convert them, so far as appears, or, at least, gave little attention to any other. That the prophecies were really considered the main proof of the Messiahship of Jesus by the apostles and evangelists is plain from a vast number of passages in the New Testament; and it is still held to be so by many Christians, though, like miracles, the prophecies have, of late, lost much of their ancient credit. "The greatest proofs of Jesus Christ", says Pascal, "are the prophecies, and thus God foreordained; for the fulfilment of the prophecies is a miracle subsisting from the beginning of the church to the end. * * If one man alone had made a book predicting successfully the time and the manner of the coming of Jesus Christ, the evidence would have been infinite. But in the Bible there is much more. Here is a succession of men for four thousand years, who constantly, without variation, arise one after another, to predict the same event. The announcement is made by an entire people, which subsists for four thousand years to bear testimony to Him, and from that testimony they could not be turned by any threats or persecution."

Before a prophecy be received as of divine origin, it should appear on examination that the prophecy, including the date of the promised fulfilment, was expressed in clear terms; that it was made before the event foretold; that its substance was beyond the discovery of mortal wisdom; and that the special prediction, as well as all others from the same source, was literally fulfilled. There have been pretended prophets in all ages, and in all countries, professing to be possessed of divine knowledge, and teaching very different religious doctrines; and their impostures were maintained by delivering their oracles in ambiguous phrases, which could be interpreted either way to suit the event. Nearly five hundred years before Christ, the Athenians sent to the heathen oracle at Delphi, to learn how they

could best resist the great invasions of the Persians, who were approaching. The oracle advised the Athenians to trust in wooden walls. This advice was not explicit, but the Athenians understood it to be a promise that they should succeed by relying upon their navy; and the Greeks were all convinced, by the result of the battle of Salamis, of what, as a nation, they never doubted before, that the oracle of Delphi was possessed of more than human foreknowledge. Grote relates the following instance of ancient prophecy :—" Cræsus sent to inquire of the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi, whether he should undertake an expedition against Cyrus. The reply was that if he did, he would subvert a mighty empire. He sent again and enquired whether his empire would be durable. The reply was :—" When a mule shall become king of the Medes then thou must run away." Cræsus attacked Cyrus, was defeated, made a prisoner, and his kingdom was subjected to the Medes and the Persians. He accused the Oracle with falsehood, but the reply was that ' When the god told him he would subvert a mighty empire, it was his duty to inquire which empire the god meant? and if he neither understood the meaning nor chose to ask for information, he had himself to blame for the result. Besides, Cræsus neglected the warning given to him, about the acquisition of the Median kingdom by a mule. Cyrus was that mule—son of a Median mother, of royal breed, by a Persian father, at once of a different race and of lower position.' This triumphant justification extorted even from Cræsus himself, a full confession that the sin lay with him, and not with the god." One more example of a supposed divine prophecy, (of which thousands could be produced) :—Gibbon says that " In a very long discourse on the evidences of the divine authority of the Gospel, which is still extant, Constantine [the emperor who first made Christianity respectable and legal in Rome] dwells with peculiar complacency on the Sibylline verses and the fourth eclogue of Virgil. Forty years before the birth of Christ, the Mantuan bard, as if inspired by the celestial muse of of Isaiah, had celebrated with all the pomp of oriental metaphor the return of the Virgin, the fall of the serpent, the approaching birth of a god-like child, the offspring of the great Jupiter, who should expiate the guilt of the human

kind, and govern the peaceful universe with the virtues of his father: the rise and appearance of a heavenly race, a primitive nation throughout the world, and the gradual restoration of the innocence and felicity of the golden age. The poet was perhaps unconscious of the secret sense and objects of these sublime predictions, which have been so unworthily applied to the infant son of a consul or a triumvir; but, if a more splendid and indeed specious interpretation of the fourth eclogue contributed to the conversion of the first Christian Emperor, Virgil may deserve to be ranked among the most successful missionaries of the gospel." Such are the records of an infinitely small portion of the fraud and credulity of former times: and the world is not yet too wise to profit by the lesson.

§ 96. *The alleged Messianic prophecies have no reference to Jesus.* I admit that all the passages, claimed as prophetic of him in the Old Testament, were written several hundred years before he was born, and if it appear that they, or any one of them, foretell his coming and character, in a clear and unmistakeable manner, then I shall confess that the evidences of Christianity are not all based on ignorance and superstition. We find that the Evangelists, in their biography of Jesus, frequently, in mentioning some trifling incident, add that this event occurred "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken" by some Old Testament prophet, but when we come to refer to the writings of the latter, we find no prophecy whatever. When the Evangelist discovered that a sentence of his biography bore a resemblance to a sentence in the Old Testament, it appears that he added "that it might be fulfilled." The Jewish pedantry and veneration for their old books was so great that they might be influenced by such arguments, which, if they were not part of the "Word of God," would be beneath notice now. We shall take a glance at the more important of these predictions:—

Matthew says (*I. 23*) "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord, by the prophet, saying, behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us." The reference is undoubtedly to *Isaiah* (*VII. 14*), "Therefore the Lord

himself shall give you a sign : behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." There does appear to be a coincidence there, which, if we admit that Jesus was born of a virgin, is very singular, to say the least. But let us see what Isaiah says in continuation of the above extract : " Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. For, before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." What reference has that to Jesus ? We find on examination that Jehovah addressed this language, promising a sign to King Ahaz, when the latter was expecting an attack from the united forces of the kings of Syria and Samaria. The Lord promised that before a child soon to be born should grow to boyhood, these two kings should be overthrown. The child was apparently a son of the prophet, for elsewhere (*VIII.* 3, 4) he says that he had a child, by a prophetess, and Jehovah again promises that before the child shall be able to pronounce the word " father " Samaria and Syria should be spoiled by the Assyrian king. Thus, the first of the boasted prophecies, instead of furnishing evidence of Christ's mission, proves that the inspiration of Matthew did not extend to giving a common-sense interpretation to the Old Testament.

The second appeal to a Messianic prediction (*Mat. II.* 6) refers to a " ruler in Israel " who should come out of Bethlehem, as foretold by Micah (*V.* 2), but the Hebrew prophet says that this ruler should deliver " us from the Assyrians." Jesus was neither a ruler in Israel nor a conqueror of the Assyrians.

Matthew (*II.* 15) finds this third big trump in Hosea (*XI.* 1), who says, " When *Israel* was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." It might be a question whether the writer of Matthew could possibly have claimed this as a prophecy of Christ, under the delusions of superstitious ignorance, free from any consciousness or suspicion of fraud. Hosea is plainly speaking of the Jewish nation alone. Strauss says " Not a little courage was necessary to apply the first part of that sentence to the Jews under Moses, and the latter part to Jesus, but Matthew did it."

Matthew (*II. 17*), says that Jeremiah (*XXXI. 15*) in speaking of "Rachel weeping for her children", foretold the weeping of the women of Judea for their children massacred by Herod. The Hebrew priest writes of the sorrows of his people in the Babylonian captivity. He says that Jehovah shall gather Israel (*v. 10*), and promises that the children for whom Rachel (the personification of the Jewish nationality) wept, should "come again from the land of the enemy" (*v. 16*).

Matthew says (*II. 23*) that Christ was a Nazarene, in accordance with prophecy. There is no parallel passage in the Bible. In *Judges (XIII. 7)*, it is said that Samson "shall be a Nazarite to God", but there is no perceptible connection between Christ and Samson, so far as such a prophecy is concerned.

Matthew (*III. 2*) says, "For this [John the Baptist] is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" This passage is found in *Isaiah (XL. 3)*, but there is nothing to mark the sentence as peculiarly applicable to any one person, and it might as well be applied to any prophet, or forerunner, of a pretended Messiah, as to John the Baptist. The writer of *Isaiah* meant evidently to "give a joyful exhortation to the Jews on their return from captivity."

Matthew says (*VIII. 16, 17*), that Jesus healed the sick and expelled devils, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 'Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sickness.'" Isaiah says (*LIII. 4*), "Hereby he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." This chapter *LIII.* of *Isaiah* is held by the Christians to contain the most remarkable and convincing prophecy in the Bible—a complete description of Jesus. I shall insert the whole chapter here.

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness: and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected by men: a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from

him : he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows ; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him : and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray : we have turned every one to his own way : and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth : he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep, before her shearers, is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment : and who shall declare his generation ? for he was cut off out of the land of the living : for the transgressions of *my people* was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death : because he had done no violence neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him : he hath put him to grief : when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail in his soul and shall be satisfied ; by his knowledge shall my righteous *servant* justify many : for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong : because he hath poured out his soul unto death : and he was numbered with the transgressors : and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors."

This chapter of *Isaiah* was considered prophetic by the Jews before the time of Jesus, and that it bears some resemblance to the history of the Galilean Messiah, as told by the evangelists, is not to be denied. But before and after this chapter, the Hebrew prophet speaks of Jacob or Israel, and it is reasonable to suppose, if the context will admit the supposition, that his subject is the same in all these chapters, and that he would not change from Jacob to Jesus and from Jesus to Jacob, without some clear intimation. The prophetic strain begins at chapter *XLV*. and continues to chapter *LVII*. Most of the intermediate chapters in the English Bible have headings which speak of "Christ" as the subject of the prophecy, but these headings are modern additions. Now, all these prophetic chapters should be considered together. In chapter *XLIX*. verse 3, the prophet says "Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified" : "kings shall be thy nursing fathers" (v. 23) "and I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their

own blood" (verse 26). Jehovah says unto Zion "Thou art my people" (*LI.* 16), "thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling and wrung them out" (*v.* 17) and "behold, I have taken out of thy hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury : thou shalt no more drink it again : But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee" (*v.* 22, 23) ; "put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city ; for henceforth, there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean" (*LII.* 1) : "my people went down into Egypt aforetime to sojourn there, and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause" (*v.* 4) ; "the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem" (*v.* 9) : the burnt-offerings and the sacrifices of the stranger "shall be accepted upon mine altar" (*LVI.* 7) : and so forth. The whole context shows that Israel is the subject whose woes in many captivities have made him meek and humble like a bruised reed ; whom the Jehovah would not desert, but would again elevate him to high honor. There is no part of the prophecy which is not quite as applicable to Israel as to Jesus, and many passages are entirely inapplicable to the latter. The applicability of all these Old Testament passages to Jesus, depends also, to some extent, upon the question whether the "throne" which was to remain in the family of David forever was that of a temporal and earthly kingdom, or of a spiritual and celestial dominion. We shall see in a subsequent section (§ 99) that it should be temporal : and this fact established, the prophecies of Jesus are quashed.

"But though he had done so many miracles before him, yet they believed not on him ; that the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled, which he spake ' Lord who hath believed our report ? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed ? ' Therefore, they could not believe, because that Esaias said again ' He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart.' " *John XII.* 37-40.

"And he [Jehovah] said [to me, Isaiah] ' Go and tell this people [the Jews] ' Hear ye indeed, but understand not : and see ye indeed, but perceive not.' * * * Then I said ' Lord how long ' ? And he said ' Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate.' " *Is. VI.* 8-13.

There is not a word in that chapter of *Isaiah* hinting a prophecy of the Messiah. The whole context indicates a reference to his own times, or to those of the Babylonian captivity. Besides, the idea that Jehovah would prevent men from believing his truth for the sake of having a prophecy fulfilled, is not quite consonant with our notions of what divine justice and mercy should be.

Matthew represents the devil in the scene of the temptation as requesting Jesus to cast himself off the pinnacle of the temple ;—‘ If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down : for it is written ‘ He shall give his angels charge concerning thee : and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone ’ (*Mat. IV. 6. 7*). There is nothing in the *Psalms* from which Satan quoted (*XCI. 11. 12*) to show that it made reference to any especial person ; but Jesus admitted by his reply to Satan that the interpretation of the passage, as a prophecy of him, was correct. The Psalmist spoke of the pious man, who abides “ under the shadow of the Almighty ”, and whom He shall protect from evil. The idea of the devil’s appealing to prophecy is not more absurd than that of finding a prophecy of Jesus in this passage.

Bishop Horne, who was too devout to question the existence of a prophetic meaning in the Old Testament passages, referred to by the Evangelists as predictions of Jesus, too sensible not to see that those passages had other meanings, and too honest not to confess it, writes in the following ingenuous manner of some of the New Testament appeals to prophecies of Jesus in the *Psalms* :

“ The second *Psalms* presents itself, to all appearance, as an inauguration hymn composed by David, the anointed of Jehovah, when by him, crowned with victory, and placed triumphant on the sacred hill of Zion. But let us turn to the *Acts* (*IV. 25*), and there we find the apostles declaring the *Psalms* to be descriptive [prophetic] of the exaltation of Jesus Christ, and of the opposition raised against his Gospel, both by Jew and Gentile.

“ In the eighth *Psalms*, we may imagine the writer to be setting forth the preëminence of man in general above the rest of the creation : but by *Hebrews* (*II. 6*) we learn that the supremacy conferred on the second Adam, the man

Christ Jesus, over all things in heaven and earth, is the subject there treated of.

“ St. Peter stands up (*Acts II. 25*) and preaches the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the latter part of the sixteenth *Psalm* : and lo, three thousand souls are converted by the sermon. [The sermon of Peter is given entire in the *Acts*, and we have the alleged prophecy in the *Psalm*s entire as they had it to whom Peter preached ; but if that sermon and that prophecy make any converts now-a-days, it will be, as Brougham says of the effect of Addison’s defense of Christianity in a case known to him, just the opposite of that intended. The whole amount of the said prophecy is that the Lord will not leave the Psalmist’s “ soul in hell”, nor suffer his “ holy one to see corruption”. There is no reference to Jesus : and if there had been, there could have been no fulfilment, unless it were shown that he had risen from the dead ; and Peter does not endeavor to show this in his sermon. Any one who believed in the resurrection of Jesus, must have been a Christian without any farther conversion : he who did not believe it, would not, after having lived in Jerusalem during the whole ministry of Christ, have been converted by the pedantic assumptions of Peter].

“ Of the eighteenth *Psalm*, we are told in the course of the sacred history (2. S. XXII.), that ‘ David spake unto the Lord the words of this song, in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hands of his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul ;’ yet in *Romans* (XV. 9), the ninth verse of that *Psalm*, is adduced as proof that the Gentiles should glorify God for his mercy in Christ Jesus : ‘ As it is written, ‘ For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles and sing unto thy name.’

“ In the nineteenth *Psalm*, David seems to be speaking of the material heavens and their operations only, when he says ‘ Their sound is gone forth unto all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.’ But St. Paul (*Rom. X. 18*), quotes the passage to show that [this was a prophecy and had been fulfilled in the fact that] the Gospel had been universally published by the Apostles.

“ Jesus appropriated the twenty-second *Psalm* to himself by beginning it in the midst of his sufferings on the

cross : ' My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?' and the words of the eighth verse were actually used by the chief priests, when they reviled him, ' He trusted in God,' &c., *Mat. XXVII.* 43.

" When David says, in the fortieth *Psalms*, ' Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire ; so I am come to do thy will : ' we might suppose him only to declare in his own person that obedience is better than sacrifice ; but from *Hebrews* (*X.* 5), we learn that the Messiah speaks, in that place, of his advent in the flesh to abolish the legal sacrifices, and to do away with sin, by the oblation, once for all.

" That tender and pathetic complaint in the forty-first *Psalms*,—' Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me '—undoubtedly might be, and probably was, originally uttered by David, upon the revolt of his old friend and counsellor, Ahithophel, to the party of his rebellious son Absalom. But we are certain, from *John* (*XIII.* 18), that this Scripture was fulfilled when Christ was betrayed by his apostate disciple : ' I speak not of you all ; I know whom I have chosen ; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ' He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.'

" The sixty-eighth *Psalms*, though apparently conversant about Israelitish victories, the translation of the Ark to Zion, and the services of the Tabernacle ; yet does, under those figures, treat of Christ's resurrection ; his going up on high, leading captivity captive, pouring out the gifts of the spirit, erecting his Church in the world, and enlarging it by the accession of the nations to the faith ; as will be evident to any one who considers the force and consequence of the apostle's citation from it (*Eph. IV.* 7, 8) ; ' unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.'

" St. Matthew (*XII.* 35), informing us that Jesus spake to the multitude in parables, gives it as one [the only] reason why he did so, ' That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet (*Ps. LXXIII.* 2), ' I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.' " Adam Clarke says that many of these quota-

tions from the Old Testament "are accommodated" to the New Testament story, "their own historical meaning being different, may be innocently credited ; but let it always be remembered, that these accommodations are made by the same Spirit by which the *Psalms* were originally given ; that this Spirit has a right to extend its own meaning, and to adapt his own words to subjects, transactions, and times, to which, from similarity of circumstances, they may be applicable. Many passages of the Old Testament seem to be thus quoted [as predictions] in the New. And, often, the words a little *altered*, and the meaning *extended*, to make them suitable to existing circumstances" [the later fables].

It appears to me that Dr. Clarke, in this defense of those passages in which the Evangelists appear, to our corrupt reason, to place an arbitrary and absurd meaning upon portions of the Old Testament, does not take so strong a position as he might. For by this mode of reasoning, it is required that the student should believe beforehand that Jehovah wrote both the Old and New Testament, whereas some persons might seek for proof of such a theory and in the search might stumble on those very alleged prophecies, and thereby be led to doubt. Besides, by his method of defense, Mohammed and Jo Smith might be proved to be the Messiah just as well as Jesus. The only proper and safe position for a friend of the Bible to take is, that God made common sense, and is the absolute proprietor of it ; and, since he has a right to do what he will with his own, he might permit his inspired prophets and evangelists to dispense with the use of it, whenever they saw fit, and no man could have any right to complain.

The errors of the New Testament writers in the allusions to the alleged prophecies, are so evident, that the Church has been sorely troubled to get over them. About a century ago, Whiston, an ardent believer, and the successor of Sir Isaac Newton in his mathematical professorship, published a book to prove that the Jews, during the early ages of the Christian Church, had fraudulently altered the passages of the Old Testament referred to as prophecies of Christ, by the Evangelists. The skeptics replied, that if such were the fact, the Old Testament was not reliable on any point. Whiston's theory was widely received as correct, until a

comparison of all the ancient copies of the Jewish Scriptures showed them to be all alike in the alleged predictions. Another theory was that the Old Testament passages referred to had two meanings—one historical and the other prophetic. This appears to have been the mode in which Dr. Arnold sought to escape from the difficulties of the case. He says "We find, throughout the New Testament, references made to various passages in the Old Testament which are alleged as prophetic of Christ, or of some particulars of the Christian dispensation. Now, if we turn to the context of these passages, and so endeavor to discover their meaning, according to the only sound principles of interpretation, it will often appear that they do not relate to the Messiah, or to Christian times, but are either expressions of religious affections generally, such as submission, love, hope, etc., or else refer to some particular circumstances in the life and condition of the writer, or of the Jewish nation, and do not at all show that any thing more remote, or any events of a more universal and spiritual character were designed to be prophesied." And again he says "Every prophecy, as uttered by man (that is by an intelligent, and not a mere mechanical instrument), and at the same time as inspired by God, must, as far as appears, have a double sense : one, the sense entertained by the human mind of the writer ; the other, the sense infused into it by God. * * We may even suppose the prophet to be totally ignorant of the divine meaning of his words, and to intend to express a meaning of his own quite unlike God's meaning." It is an evidence that Biblical prophecy has got into a very tight place, when the most learned and able defenders of it begin to admit that the prophets did not know their own meaning. If Isaiah did not know his own meaning, what security have we that any body else did, or does ? Palfrey meets the difficulty boldly, confesses that "the New Testament writers did sometimes [!] interpret the Old Testament erroneously," and makes the judicious observation that "the theory of a double sense" is "justly liable to the charge of violating all the principles of language, and being in fact the theory of no definite sense whatever."

The Christians cannot lay "their finger * on a single

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Old Testament prediction clearly referring to Jesus Christ, intended by the utterer of it to relate to him, prefiguring his character and career, and manifestly fulfilled in his appearance on earth. This they cannot do. Most of the passages usually adduced as complying with these conditions, referred, and were clearly intended to refer, to eminent individuals in Israelitish history : many are not prophecies at all. The Messiah, the anointed deliverer, expected by the Jews, hoped for and called for by their poets and prophets, was of a character so different and a career so opposite, to those of the meek, lowly, long-suffering Jesus, that the passages describing the one never could have been applied to the other without a perversion of ingenuity, and a disloyal treatment of their obvious signification, which, if employed in any other field than that of theology, would have met with the prompt discredit and derision they deserve. This disingenuousness is obvious in one point especially : the Messianic prophecies are interpreted *literally* or *figuratively*, as may best suit their adaptation to the received history of Jesus. Thus that 'the wolf shall lie down with the lamb, and the lion eat grass like an ox', is taken figuratively : that 'the Messiah should ride into Jerusalem' [on two asses] is taken literally."

There are a great many clear predictions in the Old Testament, of a royal Messiah, of which the Evangelists make no mention. They attach great importance to the prediction that the Messiah was to be of the house of David, and they endeavor to show that, in this respect, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy. But they fail entirely in this endeavor. They show the genealogy of Joseph, none of whose blood ran in veins of the Galilean reformer. The Davidical blood of Joseph is frequently asserted—that of Mary never. The angel said to Joseph, "thou son of David" (*Mat. I. 20*) : and Luke says Jesus was born of "a virgin, espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David" (*Luke I. 27*). This language implies that Mary was not of the house of David. All the repeated assertions about the royal blood of Joseph are not only without interest as concerns Jesus, but they are really absurd—mere nonsense—impertinent stuff.

§ 97. The eighth chapter of *Daniel* is reputed to con-

tain some of the most remarkable prophecies in the Bible. Hennell says, it gives, "an account of a vision of a ram with two horns, which was smitten by a he-goat having a notable horn between his eyes, which horn being broken, four other notable horns came up toward the four winds of heaven. The chapter itself informs us that by this was meant the conquest of the kings or kingdoms of Media and Persia, by the king of Grecia; the first great horn being the first king, viz. : Alexander the Great, and the four notable horns after him, four kingdoms, which shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power, *i. e.*, plainly the four Macedonian monarchies of Thrace, Macedon, Syria, and Egypt. So far this vision is clear, and commentators agree. But Daniel sees coming out of the four notable horns a little horn, which plays a very conspicuous part, and to determine who the little horn is, forms the great problem of the book of *Daniel*. Josephus understood it to mean Antiochus Epiphanes; according to Jerome, it was Antiochus as a type of Anti-Christ. Sir Isaac Newton thought it meant the Romans. Bishop Newton thought it meant first the Romans and afterwards the popes." Many biblical critics, including Arnold and Neander, believe that a portion of the book was written after the time of Alexander.

§ 98. The only book in the Bible making pretensions to be purely prophetic, is *Revelations*, and it is the most obscure portion of the Sacred Scripture. No interpretation has ever been offered that could find acceptance among any large portion of the Christian church. Nearly every prominent commentator on the Bible has had his own theory of the meaning of the *Apocalypse*, and these theories have been in many cases most inconsistent with each other. Alexander says that the book is "deeply mysterious",—that is to say, nobody knows what it means. Milman candidly confesses "it is to be feared that a history of the interpretation of the *Apocalypse* would not give a very favorable view either of the wisdom or of the charity of the successive ages of Christianity." Sir Isaac Newton, a very devout Christian, acknowledges that there are no true prophecies in the Bible, when he says, "God gave these [*Revelations*] and the prophecies of the Old Testament,

not to satisfy men's curiosity by enabling them to foreknow things, but, that after they were fulfilled, they might be interpreted by the event ; and His prescience, not that of the interpreter, be then manifested thereby to the world." Sir Isaac thus admits that the biblical prophecies furnish no evidence of the truth of the Scriptures or of the Messiahship of Jesus : for a prophecy, which does not enable men "to foreknow things" but which is to be interpreted by "the event" is a pitiful affair, in no way superior to the predictions of the heathen oracles.

§ 99. *The Bible contains many false prophecies.* Many of its predictions never were, and never can be fulfilled. If this fact be established, we must refuse to receive the Bible as a divine revelation : for such a revelation never could contain false prophecies.

One of the most glaring of these false prophecies, is that of the perpetuity of the temporal throne of Israel in the family of David. Proof that such a prophecy is contained and frequently repeated in the Old Testament, will not only show the fallibility of the book, but will also show the falsehood of the claim of the Apostles and the Evangelists, that Jesus was the Messiah, and that this prophecy was fulfilled by the perpetuity of his church. Luke (*I.* 32, 33) and Peter (*Acts II.* 30) assert that the throne, which was to remain in the family of David forever, was a spiritual throne, and that Christ, as the head of the Church, will occupy that throne to all eternity, and thus fulfil the prophecy. Let us see whether the Old Testament texts will permit us to understand the prophecy as meaning a spiritual throne.

"He [Solomon] shall build me [Jehovah] an house, and I will establish his *throne* forever." *1 Ch. XVII.* 12.

"I will settle him in mine house and in mine kingdom forever : and his *throne* shall be established for evermore." *1 Ch. XVII.* 14.

"The Lord God of Israel chose me [David] before all the house of my father to be *king* over Israel forever." *1 Ch. XXVIII.* 4.

"Once I have sworn by my holiness, that I will not *lie* unto David. His *seed* shall endure forever, and his *throne* as the sun before me." *Ps. LXXXIX.* 35. 36.

"Therefore, now, Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David, my father, that thou promisedst him, saying 'There shall

not fail thee a *man* in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel.'"
1 K. VIII. 25.

"My mercy shall not depart away from him [Solomon] as I took it away from Saul, whom I put away before thee [David]. And thy *house*, and thy *kingdom* shall be established forever."
2 S. VII. 14-16.

Several pages of such stuff might be quoted ; but it is enough. The "kingdom", the "throne, the "house", the "seed" of David should be established, and he should never want a "man" to represent his family ; his descendants should be kings "over Israel" forever. These passages spoken by inspiration, concerning a usurping monarch and his son and successor, could not be understood otherwise than as promising the temporal throne of that nation to their descendants forever : and there is nothing in these passages, or in any other, to imply the promise of any other than a temporal throne. And yet, the Christian priests have been so disingenuous and shameless as to assert for eighteen centuries that the Old Testament writers meant by these passages to prophesy the eternal dominion, not of David's mortal descendants over the nation of Jews, but of Jesus Christ over the universal church. In the verse last quoted, we see that Jehovah would not withdraw his mercy from the house of David, as he withdrew it from Saul, who was dethroned. The unmistakeable meaning of this passage is that David's sons should hold that temporal throne forever. That the ancient Jews understood these texts to foretell the perpetuity of the temporal throne, is a notorious fact : and accordingly, they expected the Messiah to be a temporal ruler. We find this interpretation given in the Old Testament itself, with evident approval, as the correct one. When the ten tribes, four-fifths of the nation, revolted, and chose Jeroboam for their king, Abijah, the grandson of Solomon, appealed to the rebellious Israelites to return to their obedience, because "the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to David, and to his sons" (2 Ch. XIII. 5). Again, at a later day, when Athaliah usurped the throne, Jehoiada, the high priest, a person mentioned with great respect by the sacred record, headed a revolt against her, and established Joash, the legitimate Davidical heir of the throne, in his hereditary

rights. In organizing the revolt, Jehoiada delivered a speech to his friends, declaring "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the Lord hath said of the sons of David" (2 Ch. XXIII. 3). Again, we read that Jehoram, the descendant of David and king of Judah, was very wicked and idolatrous, and Jehovah was greatly incensed against him. "Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David" (2 Ch. XXI. 7): that is, he would permit the Davidical dynasty to retain the throne, but it was only on account of his promise to their ancestor.

I have already shown that the prophets foretold the perpetuity of the Mosaic law, with all its rites (§ 67): and while this law should continue in force, there was no room for such a Messiah as Jesus proved to be. When we turn to the true Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, we find that the Messiah was evidently to be a temporal king, Jerusalem should recover its glory, the worship in the temple should be reëstablished in its former splendor, and the Levites should continue their ministrations. Thus, Zechariah says (XII. 16) "And it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up, from year to year, to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of the Tabernacles." Consider also the following from Jeremiah:

" 'Behold, the days will come', saith the Lord, 'that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the branch of righteousness [the Messiah] to grow up unto David: *and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.* In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, 'The Lord our Righteousness'. 'For thus', saith the Lord, 'David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel: neither shall the priests, the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to kindle meat-offerings, and do sacrifices continually. * * * Thus, saith the Lord, if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne, and with the Levites, my priests, my ministers.' " Jer. XXXIII. 14-18. 20. 21.

"I will make them [the two nations of Judah and Israel] one

nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel ; and one king shall be king over them all ; and they shall no more be two nations.

* * * so shall they be my people, and I will be *their* God. And David, my servant, shall be king over them ; and they all shall have one shepherd : and they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob, my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their children's children forever : and my servant, David, shall be their prince forever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them ; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them : and I will place them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore." *Ezek. XXXVII. 22-26.*

"It is trifling" says F. W. Newman "to pretend that the land promised to Jacob and in which the old Jews dwelt, was a spiritual, and not the literal Palestine ; and therefore it is impossible to make out that Jesus has fulfilled any part of this representation. The description that follows [in *Ezekiel XL*, etc.] of the new city and temple with the sacrifices offered 'by the priests, the Levites, of the seed of Zadok,' and the gate of the sanctuary for the prince [*XLIV. 3*] and his elaborate account of the borders of the land (*XLVIII. 13-23*) place the earnestness of Ezekiel's literalism in still clearer light."

"It * has never been shown that there is, in the whole of the Old Testament, one single sentence that in the plain and natural sense of the words, foretells the birth, life or death of Jesus of Nazareth. If the scriptures have seventy-two senses, as one of the Rabbins declares, or if it foretells whatever comes to pass, as Augustine says, and means all it can be made to mean, as many modern seem to think, why predictions and types of Jesus may be found in the first chapter of *Genesis*, in Noah and Abraham, and Samson, as well as in Virgil's fourth Eclogue, the Odes of Horace, and the story of the Trihemerine Hercules.

"The Messianic expectations and prophecies seem to have originated in this way ; after the happy and successful periods of David and Solomon, the kingdom was divided into Judah and Israel, the two tribes and the ten, and the national prosperity declined. Pious men hoped for better times ; they naturally connected these hopes with a per-

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sonal deliverer,—a descendant of David their most popular king. The deliverer would unite the two kingdoms under the old form. A poetic fancy endowed him with wonderful powers, made him a model of goodness. Different poets arrayed their expected hero in imaginary drapery to suit their own conceptions. Malachi gives him a fore-runner. The Jews were the devoutest of nations ; the popular deliverer must be a religious man. They were full of pious faith ; so the darker the present, the brighter shone the Pharos of Hope in the future. Sometimes this deliverer was called the Messiah ; this term is not common in the Old Testament, however, but is sometimes applied to Cyrus by the Pseudo-Isaiah.

“These hopes and predictions of a deliverer, involved many important things—a reünion of the divided tribes—a return of the exile—the triumph and extension of the kingdom of Israel—its eternal duration and perfect happiness. Idolatry was to be rooted out; the nations improved in morals and religion : Truth and Righteousness were to reign ; Jehovah was to be reconciled with his people ; all of them were to be taught of God : and other nations were to come up to Jerusalem and be blessed. But the Mosaic law was to be eternal : the old ritual war to last forever : Jerusalem was to be the capital of the Messianic kingdom, and the Jewish nation to be reëstablished in greater pomp than in the times of David. Are these predictions of Jesus of Nazareth ? He was not the Messiah of Jewish expectation—of the prophets foretelling. The farthest from it possible. The predictions demanded a political and visible kingdom in Palestine, with Jerusalem for its capital, and the old law for its ritual. The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world. The ten tribes—have they come back to the home of their fathers ? They have perished and are swallowed up in the tide of the nations, no one knowing the place of their burial. The kingdom of the two tribes soon went to the ground. These are notorious facts. The Jews are right when they say *their* predicted Messiah has not come. Does the Old Testament foretell a suffering savior, his kingdom not of this world—crucified—raised from the dead ? The idea is foreign to the Hebrew Scriptures.”

The most notable prophecy of the New Testament is that of the second coming of Christ, before the end of the generation in which the apostles lived. The prediction is as clear as language can make it ; it was published by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James, and Jude ; and is referred to in more than a score of texts :

“ Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven ; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. * * Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.” *Jesus in Matthew, XXIV. 30, 31, 34.*

“ Verily, I say unto you there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.” *Jesus in Mat., XVI. 28.*

“ The stars of heaven shall fall and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken, and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. * * Verily, I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass till all these things be done.” *Jesus in Mark, X. 25–30.*

“ Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.” *Jesus in Luke, XXI. 31, 32.*

“ If I will that he [John] tarry till I come, what is that to thee ?” *Jesus in John, XXI. 22.*

“ This we say unto you *by the word of the Lord* that we, which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God ; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Son in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” *1. Thess. VI. 15–18.*

“ Now all these things happened unto them for examples ; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” *1. Cor. X. 11.*

“ The Lord is at hand.” *Philip, IV. 5.*

“ The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” *James, V. 8*

“ Little children, it is the last time : and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now there are many Antichrists : whereby we know that it is the last time.” *1. John, II. 18.*

“ The end of all things is at hand.” *1. Pet. IV. 7.*

These quotations justify me in saying that Christ's prediction of his second advent in the time of the apostles is as clear as language can make it ; and the meaning of these passages is not contradicted, or qualified in any noteworthy respect, by any other texts in the New Testament. The author of the *second epistle of Peter* (III. 3-13), who wrote at a later date, refers to the scoffers, who asked why this prediction was not fulfilled :—"Where is the promise of his coming?" And he goes on to say, "But beloved be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." It was left for Gibbon to add—"The revolution of eighteen centuries has instructed us not to press too closely the mysterious language of prophecy and revelation."

We will not now turn to the minor abortions of inspired prophecy.

"I [Jehovah] will give to thee [Abram] and to thy seed after thee the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." *Gen. XVII. 8, XIII. 15.*

"The Lord God of Israel hath given rest unto his people that they may dwell in Jerusalem forever." 1 *Ch. XXIII. 25.*

"The Lord hath chosen Zion ; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever." *Ps. CXXXII. 14.*

"For now I have chosen and sanctified this house [Solomon's Temple], that my name may be there forever ; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually." 2. *Ch. VII. 16.*

"Them [the Levites] hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God and to minister unto him forever." 1. *Ch. XV. 2.*

"Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap." *Is. XVII. 1.*

"I [Jehovah] will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish ; he wipeth it and turneth it upside down." 2. *K. XXI. 13.*

"I [Jehovah] will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia. No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years. And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities, among the cities that are laid waste, shall be desolate forty years ; and I will scatter the Egyptians among nations and will disperse them through the countries." *Ezek. XXIX. 10-12.*

"Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. * It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from gener-

ation to generation * * her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." *Is. XIII. 19-22.*

"I will also destroy the idols, * * and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt." *Ezek. XXX. 13.*

Babylon was a great city for several centuries after the time of Isaiah, and it was an important place in the beginning of the Christian era. There were princes in Egypt for three hundred years after the time of Ezekiel, and the ancient idol-worship was maintained under the Roman dominion.

"Ezekiel (*XXIX.*) predicted* that Nebuchadnezzar should destroy Tyre. The prediction is clear and distinct; the destruction was to be complete and total. 'With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets; he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrison shall go down to the ground. * * I will make thee like the top of a rock; thou shalt be to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built up no more.' But it was not so, Nebuchadnezzar was obliged to raise the siege after investing the city for thirteen years, and go and fight the Egyptians. Then, sixteen years after the first oracle, Ezekiel takes back his own words, 'The word of the Lord came unto me 'saying 'Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar * * caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus; every head was made bald' with the chafing of the helmet, 'every shoulder was peeled' with the pressure of burthens; yet he had no wages, nor his army from Tyrus. * * Therefore, behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadnezzar.'" Tyre was a place of importance in the time of the Crusades, 1800 years after Ezekiel.

"Thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim * * He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (*Jer. XXII. 18. 19.*). "Thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim, king of Judah 'He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David; and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost'" (*Jer. XXXVI. 30.*).

"So Jehoiakin slept with his fathers [died in peace, and was buried in the royal tombs]: and Jehoiachin, his son, reigned in his stead." *2. K. XXIV. 6.*

Jeremiah, writing the word of the Lord of Hosts,

* THEODORE PARKER.

threatened destruction to the Jews who should remain in Egypt, whither they had fled at the time of the Babylonian Captivity. The prophet's purpose was probably to induce them by fright to return to Jerusalem. He said that the remnant of Judah, who had set their faces to go into the land of Egypt, "should all be consumed" by the sword, and by famine, and by pestilence, and "none shall escape or remain. Therefore" says he "hear ye the word of the Lord, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt: behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord, 'that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land of Egypt, saying 'The Lord God liveth''" (*Jer. XLIV. 12-14*). Yet there were Jews in Egypt who adhered to the faith of their fathers as late as the Christian era, and still later—the descendants of those who went thither at the time of the captivity.

In the book of *Isaiah* (*XIX.*) there is a prophecy, that the time should come when the Egyptians should war with each other, when five cities of Egypt should speak the language of Canaan, when Jehovah should have an altar in the centre of Egypt, when the Egyptians should cry unto him, when he should send them a Savior, when they should sacrifice to him, when the Assyrians should go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria and the Egyptians should serve with the Assyrians, when Israel should be third with Egypt and with Assyria; "Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people, and Assyria, the work of my hands, and Israel, mine inheritance." The fulfilment of this prophecy is indefinitely postponed.

Frequent appeal is made by Christian writers to the Hebrew prophecies of the captivity of Israel, and the still more remarkable dispersion of that people which, scattered as it is, throughout the world yet preserves its nationality, and clings with unexampled pertinacity to its religion. The predictions of the dispersion are to be found in numerous books; but I shall refer here only to *Deuteronomy* (*XXVIII*), than which there is, I believe, none more striking. Moses says that, "if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord, thy God," "thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whether the Lord shall lead thee:" "and the Lord shall

scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other : ” “ and among these nations shalt thou find no ease ” etc. (*Dent. XXVIII.* 15. 37. 64. 65). These predictions appear at first sight to have been singularly fulfilled ; but they are only a few out of a very long list, many of which are not fulfilled ; predictions such as that “ The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart ” (*v.* 28) : “ The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust ; from heaven it shall come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed ” (*v.* 24) etc. The prediction of the dispersion is ordinarily interpreted to foretell the present condition of the Jews. But it was probably written after the event to mean the dispersion of the Jews after their conquest [599 B. C.] by the king of Babylon. But whether written before or after that event, whether intended to foretell that dispersion, or the present one, it lacks the character of a true prophecy, for the want of a specification of the time when. It may safely be predicted of England that her metropolis shall be a deserted ruin, and her people dispersed to all lands, and the land shall be spoiled by foreigners ; but that time will not probably come for thousands, perhaps not for tens of thousands of years, and until it does come, the friends of the prophecy would only have to say that the time for the fulfilment had not arrived. That the dispersion predicted was that of the Babylonian captivity, is evident from predictions made after that event, that the people of Judah should no more be dispersed, that the kingdom and the capital should recover their glory, etc. The prophecy of the dispersion of a nation would be much more strange now than it was twenty-five hundred years ago, when wars in Western Asia frequently resulted in the enslavement of a whole people, and their deportation to the land of the conquerors.

“ Thus saith thy Lord, the Lord, and thy God, that pleadest the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury ; thou shalt no more drink it again.” *Is. LI.* 22.

“ Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion! put on thy beautiful garments. O ! Jerusalem, the holy city : for henceforth, there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.” *Is. LII.* 1.

“ And they shall bring all your brethren for our offering unto

the Lord, out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord, and I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain." *Is. L. 20-22.*

"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar: for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people" *Is. LVI. 6. 7.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

The intoxication of credulity is the witness of the spirit.

§ 100. Believers in the Bible say that they have conclusive proof of the truth of their faith in the witness of the spirit—a peculiar exhilaration or confidence which they feel at times in regard to their religion. That is to say, when thinking of Jehovah, they are conscious of a superstitious awe, as children are scared when threatened by the nurse with the raw-head and bloody-bones; or they think of going to heaven with so much assurance that they enjoy part of the pleasure beforehand. Macaulay, in his *Review of Ranke's History of the Popes*, speaking of the peculiar mental excitement or enthusiasm, known as "the witness of the spirit," says "It not unfrequently happens that a tinker or coal-heaver hears a sermon, or falls in with a tract, which alarms him about the state of his soul. If he be a man of excitable nerves and strong imagination, he thinks himself given over to the evil power. He doubts whether

he has not committed the unpardonable sin. He imputes every wild fancy that springs up in his mind to the whisper of a fiend. His sleep is broken by dreams of the great judgment-seat, the open books, and the unquenchable fire. If, in order to escape from these vexing thoughts, he flies to amusement or to licentious indulgence, the delusive relief only makes his misery darker and more hopeless. At length, a turn takes place. He is reconciled to his offended maker. To borrow the fine imagery of one who had himself been thus tried, he emerges from the Valley of the Shadow of Death, from the dark land of gins and snares, of quagmires and precipices, of evil spirits and ravenous beasts. The sunshine is on his path. He ascends the Delectable Mountains, and catches from their summit a distant view of the shining city which is the end of his pilgrimage." And that man has the witness of the spirit. Such is the sum and substance of this weighty evidence, which is confidently appealed to in favor of all creeds wherein a heaven and hell contribute to raise the hopes and excite the fears of the superstitious and the ignorant. This witness of the spirit is supposed to be particularly strong with all martyrs ; but if this testimony suffice for proof, all religious creeds, extensively received, must be true. All have martyrs, each equally convinced of the truth of his peculiar creed by the witness of his spirit. Locke * says " A strong and firm persuasion of any proposition relating to religion, for which a man hath either no or not sufficient proofs from *reason*, but receives them as truth wrought in the mind by extraordinary influence coming [supposed to come] immediately from God himself, seems to me to be enthusiasm which can be no evidence or ground of assurance at all, nor can, by any means, be taken for knowledge. If such groundless thoughts as these concerning ordinary matters and not religion, possess the mind strongly, we call it raving, and every one thinks it a degree of madness ; in religion, men accustomed to the thoughts of revelation make a greater allowance to it, though, indeed, it be a more dangerous madness ; but men are apt to think in religion they may, or ought to quit their reason. I find that the Christians, Mohammedans, and Brahmins all pretend to this immediate inspira-

* As quoted in King's Life of LOCKE.

tion; but it is certain that contradictions and falsehoods cannot come from God ; nor can any one that is of the true religion, be assured of anything by a way whereof those of a false religion may be and are equally confirmed in theirs. For the Turkish Dervishes pretend to revelations, ecstasies, visions, raptures, to be transported with the illumination of God, etc. The Jangis [Jaunas ?] among the Hindoos talk of being illuminated and entirely united to God, as well as the most spiritualized Christians.

“ It is to be observed concerning these illuminations, that how clear soever they may seem, they carry no knowledge nor certainty any farther than there are proofs of the truth of those things that are discovered by them ; and so far they are parts of reason, and have the same foundation with the other persuasions in a man’s mind, whereof his reason judges. If there be no proofs of them, they pass for nothing but mere imaginations of fancy, how clearly soever they appear, or acceptable they may be to the mind. For it is not the clearness of the fancy, but the evidence of the truth of a thing, which makes the certainty. He that should pretend to have a clear sight of a Turkish paradise, and of an angel sent to direct him thither, might, perhaps, have a very clear imagination of all this ; but it altogether no more proved that either there were such a place, or that an angel had the conduct of him thither, than if he saw all this in colors, well drawn by a painter ; these two pictures being no more different as to the appearance of anything resembled by them, than that one is a fleeting draught in the imagination, the other a lasting one on a sensible body.”

That kind of religious conviction, which is called the witness of the spirit, is far more abundant among the Mohammedans, and many heathen sects, than among the Christians. The power of this testimony to the truth of a religion depends upon the enthusiastic disposition of the individual and his ignorance of the evidence against his creed. Several centuries ago, the witness of the spirit was felt in nearly every Christian family, but the progress of enlightenment and skepticism has been so great, that the reason has been set comparatively free, and a philosophical indifference has taken the place of the fervent faith of the

earlier ages. F. W. Newman relates in his *Phases of Faith*, that in Aleppo, whither he had gone as a Christian missionary, a Mohammedan carpenter spoke to him as follows :—" I will tell you, sir, how the case stands. God has given you English a great many good gifts. You make fine ships and sharp penknives, and good cloth and cottons : and you have rich nobles and brave soldiers ; and you write and print many learned books ; all this is of God. But there is one thing that God has withheld from you, and has revealed to us—and that is the knowledge of the true religion, by which one may be saved."

The deep devoutness of many of the Mohammedan prayers shows the possession of the witness of the spirit, in a very high degree for their form of faith,—the following for example : " O Thou * who beholdest my state, and who knowest that, of necessity, I cannot do otherwise than be content with it—Thou from whom there is neither refuge nor defense, let not thy power and greatness suffer that he, whom Thou protectest, should perish. But if it be thy pleasure that he should perish, behold me ready for whatever Thou mayst appoint. Every chastisement which cometh from Thee, shall be sweet to me, excepting separation from Thee." Carlyle demands—" Will you ever be calling heathenism a lie, worthy of damnation, which leads its devotee to consecrate all upon its altars, and with a wonder, which transcends all your logic, bows before some idol of nature : while those who with sleepy heads and lifeless spirits meet in a framed house, and go over a different set of forms, are the only elect of God ? Clear thy mind of cant ! Does not God look at the heart ?"

* Quoted by the author of an " Essay on Intuitive Morals."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE GROWTH OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

"If He has spoken why is not
the Universe convinced?"

§ 101. Most of the books on the Evidences for Christianity, have a chapter occupied with an argument that the spread of that religion cannot be accounted for by natural causes, and must therefore have been owing to the miraculous aid of Providence. The Christians call attention to the fact, that the founder of their religion was an individual who had no advantages of birth, wealth, learning, political power or influential friends : that his associates in the labor of teaching his doctrines were men as ignorant, and poor as himself ; that they belonged to a nation which was generally despised : and that, yet notwithstanding all these disadvantages in their position, within three centuries, their doctrine was the established religion of the Roman Empire, and is now the religion of all enlightened nations. In making this argument, the Christians ask our particular attention to the manner in which Islamism was propagated. Mohammed was a wealthy man, and after having gained a few converts, he became a military leader, and by great ability as a general, made extensive conquests, and compelled his subjects to adopt his religion. By these means, and by these only, he succeeded in establishing a Church, which was once more numerous, though now less so, than the Church of Jesus. Christianity, say they, owes nothing to the sword, or to political influence : it has gained all its converts by appeals to the reason and the feelings of men.

Such is the substance of the argument for the divine origin of the Bible, from the spread of its doctrines ; but, although much importance was formerly attached to this branch of the evidences of Christianity, we shall probably conclude, on a fair consideration of the facts, that the Bible has gained its dominion in the same way as many other books claiming to be revelations from heaven.

The subjection of all the countries bordering on the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea by Alexander, and the subsequent union of the whole known world under the dominion of the Roman Emperors, had caused a great amount of friendly intercourse between peoples which had previously always been hostile to each other. It was a necessary consequence of this intercourse that old prejudices should disappear, and comparatively enlightened and liberal opinions should gain a footing. The Babylonian, the Phœnician, the Jew, the Egyptian, and the Greek, by intercourse with his fellow-subjects, discovered that they were not so bad as they had been represented, but that all were good in their way, and that each had some merit, in which he was inferior to none of the others. To aid the levelling influences of this free intercourse, the Grecian philosophy came with its grand conceptions, sublime eloquence, enchanting poetry, valuable information, and anti-ecclesiastical tone. A skeptical disposition, a tendency to reject the ancient mythology, had become prevalent among the leading Athenians as early as the Peloponnesian War, and in the time of Alexander it had spread to the lower classes, and more particularly, in the armies which conquered and occupied the Asiatic provinces of his empire. Many of these men, disbelieving the religion of their own nation, could not believe that of any other ; but they were disposed to adopt a tone of toleration, which gained the confidence of the conquered, who soon began to catch a taint of the skepticism of their masters. But it was chiefly among the Greeks and Romans that Christianity gained its first foothold ; and its main struggle was with their ancient creed. " In the various systems of Polytheism,* some wandering fanatics of Egypt and Syria, who addressed themselves to the credulous superstition of the populace, were, perhaps, the only order of priests that derived their whole support and credit from their sacerdotal profession, and were very deeply affected by a personal concern for the safety or prosperity of their tutelar deities. The ministers of Polytheism, both in Rome and in the provinces, were, for the most part, men of noble birth and of an affluent fortune, who received, as an honorable distinction, the care of a celebrated temple, or of

* GIBBON, *Decline and Fall*. Ch. XV.

a public sacrifice, exhibited very frequently, at their own expense, the sacred games, and, with cold indifference, performed the ancient rites, according to the laws and fashion of their country. As they were engaged in the ordinary occupations of life, their zeal and devotion were seldom animated by a sense of interest, or by the habits of an ecclesiastical character. Confined to their own respective temples and cities, they remained without any connection of discipline or government; and whilst they acknowledged the supreme jurisdiction of the Senate, of the College of the pontiffs, and of the Emperor, those civil magistrates contented themselves with the easy task of maintaining in peace and dignity the general worship of mankind. The religious sentiments of the Polytheists were very loose and uncertain. They were abandoned, almost without control, to the natural workings of a superstitious fancy. The accidental circumstances of their life and situation determined the object as well as the degree of their devotion; and as long as their adoration was successively prostituted to a thousand deities, it was scarcely possible that their hearts could be susceptible of a very sincere or lively passion for any of them.

“When Christianity appeared in the world, even these faint and imperfect impressions had lost much of their original power. Human reason, which, by its unassisted strength, is incapable of perceiving the mysteries of faith, had already obtained an easy triumph over the folly of Paganism; and when Tertullian or Lactantius employed their labors in exposing its follies or extravagance, they had only to transcribe the eloquence of Cicero, or the wit of Lucian. The contagion of these skeptical writings had been diffused far beyond the number of their readers. The fashion of incredulity was communicated from the philosopher to the man of pleasure or business, from the noble to the plebeian, and from the master to the menial slave who waited at his table, and who eagerly listened to the freedom of his conversation. On public occasions, the philosophic portion of mankind affected to treat with respect and decency the religious institutions of their country; but their secret contempt penetrated through the thin and awkward disguise, and even the people, when they discovered that their deities were rejected and derided by those whose rank or under-

standing they were accustomed to reverence, were filled with doubts and apprehensions concerning the truth of those doctrines, to which they had yielded the most implicit belief. The decline of ancient prejudice exposed a very numerous portion of the human kind to the danger of a painful and comfortless situation. A state of skepticism and suspense may amuse a few inquisitive minds. But the practice of superstition is so congenial to the multitude, that if they are forcibly awakened, they still regret the loss of their pleasing vision. Their love of the marvellous and supernatural, their curiosity with regard to future events, and their strong propensity to extend their hopes and fears beyond the limits of the visible world, were the principal causes which favored the establishment of Polytheism. So urgent on the vulgar is the necessity of believing, that the fall of any system of mythology will most probably be succeeded by the introduction of some other mode of superstition. Some deities, of a more recent and fashionable cast, might soon have occupied the deserted temples of Jupiter and Apollo, if, in the decisive moment, the wisdom of Providence had not interposed a genuine revelation," whose superiority to the worn-out system was perceptible to the most ignorant. Those who are inclined to pursue this reflection, instead of viewing with astonishment the rapid progress of Christianity, will, perhaps, be surprised that its success was not still more rapid and still more universal.

Here then we see two systems pitted against each other, and left for six centuries to fight without disturbance from any third party. On the one side was Polytheism, with numberless divinities, to whom the most absurd, fantastic and obscene acts were attributed : without any established confession of faith or standard of doctrine : with priests who felt no zeal, and had little interest, in their religion : without church government, or any system of religious instruction ; without the important doctrine of a future state : without a code of morality as a fundamental or necessary part of the system ; and with a state of public opinion which tolerated many very immoral actions. And this Polytheism, so weak in itself, had lost its hold on the faith, and the affections of the people. On the other side was Christianity, with a divinity who was represented as one

person ; with a rule of faith in the Bible, which might be considered clear in that age ; with a zealous priesthood united under an efficient church government ; with a careful system of religious instruction ; with the impressive doctrine of a future life, with eternal rewards and punishment clearly set forth as a fundamental article of faith : and with a code of morality, which as understood in practice, was far superior to that tolerated by the general public opinion under the ancient creed. How can we be astonished that, after having been undermined by the philosophy of the Sages and the ridicule of the Comedians of Athens and Rome during seven centuries, and after having been besieged and assaulted by the superior powers of Christianity during three centuries, that at last Polytheism was conquered and annihilated ? It deserves to be noted that the Greeks and Romans, previous to the birth of Jesus, had not only lost their faith in the creed of their fathers : but they had outgrown it. They needed something suitable for a higher stage of mental cultivation. They needed a worship without sacrifices, a God without partiality. They needed one sole divinity, not an innumerable or infinite multitude of Godlings. In all these respects the new faith was suited to their mental condition. Besides, Christianity was exceedingly elastic. Its doctrines might be interpreted to please the superstitious as well as the intelligent. Those who could not rise to the conception of pure Monotheism were permitted to worship the Virgin and a host of saints : those who were not satisfied with the simple preaching of the Gospel were amused by the gradual introduction of the Boodhistic rites, which were quite as well suited to please the vulgar fancy, as had been those of the Grecian mythology.

§ 102. But however miraculous may have been the propagation of Christianity in the early ages, all will be willing to admit, that it is not preserved now by the direct interference of Divine Providence ; and reasoning man may find it difficult to explain why Jehovah should do more for his faith eighteen hundred years ago, than he does to-day ; or, why the maintainance of his worship should not be as dear to him as its original establishment. That Christianity is losing its ground rapidly, no well-informed man can

doubt. Of the thirty-six millions of the French, it is said, and I doubt not, with entire correctness, that more than one-half are not Christians. Of the forty millions, who speak German as their mother tongue, at least one-half are pantheists, or skeptics, and of the sixty millions, who speak English, at least two thirds of the adult men are freethinkers. In Spain, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Spanish America, the Bible is losing ground with scarcely less rapidity than in the great centres of commerce and civilization. And it is remarked that in most of these countries, it is the most intelligent classes, who are the most skeptical.

And where Christianity still preserves its dominion, it takes such singular forms that we scarcely know whether its prevalence may be a source of credit to the Bible. Truth is always consistent with itself; but the numerous creeds of Christendom cannot be made to harmonize, and cannot be all true. Without venturing to decide which is right, we may safely believe, that most of them are wrong: that most of them are sadly corrupted from that Christianity which was preached by Paul.

It is strange, * if Christianity be a revelation from God, and if he established it upon earth by the immediate interposition of his omnipotent power, that it should so long have been mixed with so much human error. It is strange that, when he violated the order of nature to introduce it into men's minds, he did not annihilate those superstitions, which must necessarily begrime its purity, and weaken, if not entirely counteract, its beneficent influences. It is strange that he did not enlighten the converts to his truth, so that they might detect and discard those errors concerning religion and duty, which thousands of years had been accumulating in the world: that he did not sweep away at once all prejudices from the minds of men, so that his truth might find unrestricted entrance, and hold undisputed sway: and that he did not afterward, by a perpetual act of his power, so strengthen their understandings, and so restrain their passions and follies, that no false religious opinions should in any time to come, be introduced and maintained. Examine the history of opinions, and you will find that base

* This paragraph is altered from Norton.

superstitions and errors, which have once generally prevailed, have been very slowly removed from the Christian churches as well as from the philosophical schools,—more slowly, indeed, from the former than from the latter, and then only by entirely natural means. Common modes of conception, and the popular belief are transmitted from one generation to another, like the traditionary customs of the East. However unreasonable they may be, it is, for most part, only by a very gradual process that they are corrected. The men of one generation are the instructors of the next. Coming ignorant into the world, we are compelled to receive what others may teach us : to believe, under their direction, before we can exercise our own judgment : and when our instructors have been in error, it takes us a long time to discover the fact, and there are few who are able to discover it at all. The world is very dull and slow in unlearning its prejudices. False doctrines, which sprang up long before the introduction of Christianity, subsequently became connected with it, and still remain in a flourishing condition. In opposing the errors of the Christians, we are, in fact, often opposing only the errors of heathen philosophy, a little disguised, and somewhat modified by time and circumstances.

§ 103. Far from admitting that the propagation of Christianity is more wonderful than that of Mohammedanism, I would much prefer, as a mere question of literary argument, to maintain that the establishment of the latter is to be accounted for only on the theory of a divine interference. Mohammed used the sword ; but where did he get his first soldiers ? He already had a church before he could organize an army of believers. Besides, it is false, often as it is repeated, and much as it is dwelt upon by many advocates of the Bible, that he compelled his subjects to adopt his religion. He, as well, as his successors, gave the conquered the choice of the Koran, tribute *or* the sword—terms far more liberal than those granted by the Spaniards to the Moors and American Indians—far more liberal than those granted to the Saxons by Charlemagne, to the Dutch by Philip the Second, or to the Quakers by the Massachusetts Puritans. Moreover, Mohammedanism is preserved in comparative purity by all those who pre-

tend to receive the Koran as their Gospel. Gibbon, * writing of the Arabian prophet says "It is not the propagation, but the permanency of his religion, that deserves our wonder ; the same pure and perfect impression which he engraved at Mecca and Medina is preserved after the revolutions of twelve centuries, by the Indian, the African, and the Turkish proselytes of the Koran. If the Christian apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, could return to the Vatican, they might possibly inquire the name of the Deity who is worshipped with such mysterious rites in that magnificent temple ; at Oxford or Geneva they would experience less surprise, but it might still be incumbent on them to peruse the catechism of the church, and to study the orthodox commentators on their own writings and the words of their master." Jehovah allows his own pure teachings to be corrupted with all manner of superstitions, and at the same time permits the fraudulent systems of heathen impostors to be preserved unadulterated through long ages !

But * it is said that Mohammedanism prospered because it flattered mankind with the hope of a sensual paradise. I shall admit that the words of Mohammed should be taken in a literal sense, when he says "that every one there should have the abilities of a hundred men to satiate himself with amorous enjoyments, as well as with the pleasures of taste in eating and drinking." But this would not counterpoise the idea which the Scripture gives us of the happiness of the future life : for it speaks of it as a state whose pleasures exceed whatever the eyes have seen or the ears heard, or the heart of man can conceive (1 *Cor. II. 9*). The moment that we believe the Scripture, we represent to ourselves the happiness of heaven, as something that surpasses all imagination : we can fix no bounds to it. Strain your ideas of happiness as you can, it is impossible for you to reach its utmost extent : your hopes carry you still farther ; they are not to be limited by any bounds. Mohammed does not indulge you in this liberty : he confines you to certain limits : he multiplies a hundred times the pleasures you have already tasted, and leaves you there. What is a hundred, in comparison with an infinite number ? But

* Decline and Fall—Ch. L.

† This and the succeeding paragraph are altered from Bayle.

can we say that the Scripture speaks only of pleasure in general, when we know that it makes use of corporeal images, with promises that we shall be satisfied with the fat of God's house, and bathed in rivers of pleasure (*Ps. XXXVI. 9*). The author of the *Apocalypse* describes Heaven as a place, full of precious stones of all kinds, and fitted up regardless of expense (*Rev. XXI*). We are told that these are mere metaphors, by which spiritual pleasures are expressed. But the Mohammedans interpret the Koran in the same way, and it is a poor rule which will not work both ways; sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander. People of the most sensual passions will always prefer the Christian paradise to that of Mohammed; for the latter promises only a limited amount of pleasure, while Jesus promised pleasure without limit. Now, what the sensual want is pleasure; they care not what kind it is,—provided it be pleasure to them; and where they hope to get the most, thither they will go. It matters not that Jesus does not expressly promise the pleasures of the table and the bed: his followers are permitted to hope for all these, and for as much more as they can imagine, besides. But surely, the followers of Mohammed did not believe in his religion, because he promised a heaven full of Houris: they believed in his heaven, because his faith otherwise appeared to them to be true.

The Christians also allege, that one reason why Mohammed gained so many converts, was that he taught a loose morality, and thus gained the favor of those sensual men to whose licentious desires he gave a loose rein. But I cannot see that this false prophet has derogated from the morality of the Gospel: on the contrary, I see that with regard to ceremonies, he has very considerably aggravated the Christian yoke. He commands circumcision, which is no small hardship to adult men; he enjoins his followers to abstain from certain meats, which is a species of servitude not at all agreeable to people of the world; he forbids the use of wine, abstinence from which is a great inconvenience in all countries where the vine grows, and in ancient times Egypt, Syria, and Palestine produced much wine, and Turkey might do the same now, if it were not for the religious prohibition. Besides all this, Mohammed imposes

fasts and very troublesome bathings, and a painful assiduity in prayer. He enjoins pilgrimages ; in a word, you need only to consider the forty aphorisms into which his scheme of morals is digested, where you will find everything that is the most opposite to the corruption of the heart. Such is the precept of patience in adversity, that against speaking ill of one's neighbor, that recommending charity, that of renouncing vanity, that of abstaining from all injuries, and in short, that which is the sum of the law and the prophets, " Do to your neighbor as you would have him do unto you ". Whoever asserts that Islamism is contrived to permit all kinds of sensual indulgence to its believers, must be ignorant of the Rhamadan, when the faithful believers,—and this includes nearly the entire population in Mohammedan countries—remain without eating or drinking, from sun-rise till sun-set, and this for many days, in the hottest season of the year, in the hottest countries on the globe. Such a practice must be a more severe trial than that of any moral duty.

§ 104. Or if the progress of Mohammedanism, which be it remembered gained most of its converts, not from an expiring polytheism, but from Christianity, while the latter was still young—if the progress of Mohammedanism is not to be compared with that of the teachings of the Galilean reformer, what shall we say of the propagation of Buddhism, which still less than Christianity, was aided by the might of armies, the policy of kings, or the attractions of a lax morality ? And what shall we say of Mormonism, which had its birth in a country, where the people, taken as a whole, are the most enlightened of the earth, and which within less than thirty years has spread to all parts of the globe ? Of all that there is of marvellous in the history of the establishment of new religions, there is nothing so wonderful as that of the faith of the prophet Joseph. He faced the light of the nineteenth century ; met Christians and scoffers on terms of equality and treated them with polite cordiality ; placed himself in society, on an equality with the commonest believers of his doctrines, or at least maintained no more reserve than the most radical democrat might approve ; and yet was revered as the familiar friend of the omnipotent Creator, and as a man in every respect

deserving the most unbounded veneration. Neither was belief in his doctrine rewarded with the gratification of every sensual desire. Every believer was required, if possible, to take up his residence at the centre of the church. The more intelligent were required to go forth without money and preach the Gospel. The ignorant were compelled to give up everything for the common benefit of the faithful. A more industrious people never lived, and yet nearly all their gains were required to sustain the projects of the prophet or apostles. Thrice the whole body of the Church was expelled from their homes, and driven to seek a resting-place at a distance. They were always persecuted, maltreated, ridiculed and robbed. Their prophet was murdered and they were compelled to flee for safety to the centre of the continent. There their zeal still burns as bright as ever. They have missionaries in China, Australia, the Sandwich Islands, South America, Continental Europe, England, the United States, and in many of these countries a multitude of believers. In 1853, one person in 131 of the entire population of Utah territory was a missionary in a foreign land—a fact to which there is no approximation in the annals of the world. The book of Mormon has been translated in more than a dozen different languages ; and if Mormonism is to go on increasing for the next three hundred, as it has gone on for the last thirty years, we may believe it will strangle Christianity, if the latter should succeed in living so long, though that is not likely.

CHAPTER XX.

NO GREAT LITERARY MERIT.

“ It is probable that it [the Jewish Canon] comprehended all the remains of the ancient literature of the nation.” NORTON.

§ 105. If an omnipotent, all-wise and all-good Deity should see fit to give a revelation of his will to men, in the form of a book, we might reasonably anticipate that it would possess, in a very high degree, all those qualities which are found in books calculated to enlighten the mind, stimulate the moral feelings, and gratify the taste. We might anticipate that it would contain a perspicuous, comprehensive, and perfect exposition of the fundamental principles which lie at the basis of moral and religious philosophy. We might expect, if any portion were historical in its nature, that we should there find, in unsurpassed and unsurpassable excellence, the critical acumen, the lucid arrangement, and the philosophical commentary, which may be considered among the chief merits of the most esteemed modern histories. If the inspired penman should offer us any poetry, we might anticipate that it should suffer nothing by comparison with the works of uninspired poets, but rather that it should possess a beauty and sublime grandeur of thought, and a force of expression, which should bring down to earth the glories of heaven. If the revelation should offer us any proverbs, we should look for a philosophy of common life and common sense vastly superior to the sayings of the Sancho Panzas of rude nations. And if a code of civil laws were offered to us as having been written out under the dictation of the all-wise ruler of the universe, for the government of his favorite nation, we might surely anticipate that they should be far superior to the crude and defective systems which have been painfully compiled by human law-givers. In short, if we might form an opinion beforehand of what a book-revelation from heaven should contain, we should expect that it would possess every kind

of literary merit in the highest possible degree, and possess an evident and great superiority, in every department of literary excellence, over all mere human compositions. This much we might anticipate, whether we suppose the Deity to be the author of the words or not. If he inspired the writers with the very language to be used, it would follow, as a matter of course, that that language should bear the marks of its divine authorship in the excellence of every line. Or, if he inspired the writers only with the ideas, we might presume that he would give them genius to appreciate, and literary ability to set forth the thoughts of inspiration. At least, the divine splendor of the thought should be there. In no case could we believe that he would intrust his word to persons so ignorant or foolish that their writings must at first sight appear inferior the compositions of those who reject and scoff at the divine truth.

Does the Bible come up to that estimate? If not, it was not composed by God Almighty. Christians should say either that I demand too much of him, or that the Bible comes up to my demands. As to the former, I shall not argue: and I shall have a few words to say upon the literary merit of the Bible.

§ 106. In the first place, as a whole, it is a clumsy, confused book. There is no regularity in its plan—history, poetry, criminal law, decrees for ceremonial observances, prophetic rhapsodies, and maxims of morality are mixed together in a very confused manner. Moses changes from history to law a dozen times without any explanation, or good cause discoverable. Isaiah changes in the same way from history to prophetic poetry. The same story is frequently told over repeatedly, as though when Jehovah had written a thing once, it was not enough. Thus, the books of *Chronicles* are a mere repetition of the matter contained in the books of *Samuel* and *Kings*, with the exception of some slight variations, which show that the memory of the divine author was not good, or that he was not under obligation to tell the same story always in the same way. So also the first four books of the New Testament, all purport to contain the same matter—a biography of Jesus. Besides, that the same matter is given repeatedly, it is evident that on many occasions, the writers have obtained their inspira-

tion from a previously existing book, instead of from Jehovah: thus exhibiting a poverty of spirit which would bring some slight discredit on a mere uninspired author. The passages which are given twice, word for word, in the Bible, without any good reason whatever for their repetition, would cover more than thirty pages of this book. Thus, chapter XIX. 2 *K.* is, with the exception of very few words, literally copied in the XXXVIIth chapter of *Isaiah*. Were both these chapters inspired by Jehovah? If so, he must have inspired the very words, for such a similarity of language could never have been owing to mere accident. But was it not enough, when he said a thing once? By a comparison of *Psalms* CV. 1–15, and 1 *Ch.* XVI. 8–22, we discover that a Psalm is repeated, and another case of the same kind will appear on an examination of *Psalms* XVIII. and 2 *S.* XXII. The uninspired poet, who should insert the same verses twice, in the same book, would be laughed at; but perhaps the Christians may be disposed to assert that Jehovah is the master of the rules of taste, and may dispense with them when he pleases.

§ 107. The historical parts of the Bible scarcely deserve the name of history. They are barren lists of the names of the kings, with a few particulars as to the length of their lives, and their reigns, and their disposition to obey the priests. Not one of the Biblical histories possesses a single merit, such as we seek in our modern histories—such as we find, in a high degree, in Hume, Gibbon, Carlyle, Macaulay, Grote, and Arnold. The book of *Judges* is wanting entirely in its chronology, and the valuable information conveyed in it, could be easily condensed into one tenth of the space which it now occupies. In many places, long intervals of time are passed over without any record of the events: in other places, inversions have been made, so that the order of time is seriously and repeatedly violated. In fact, if any author in this age, should publish such “historical” works as those of the Bible, he would be considered to be beneath the notice of critics. Why could not the ancient Jews write good history (like the Greeks and Romans, for instance) without inspiration? And when they were inspired, why did they make such miserable stuff?

§ 108. The poetry of the Bible is far better than the

history, and some portions of the *Psalms*, *Job* and *Isaiah* will compare creditably with uninspired verse. I will not say that there is any one poetical passage in the Hebrew Scriptures that may not find its equal in every point of poetic excellence, among the works of the English poets, without turning to the great treasures of the Greeks, Germans, Italians, Spanish, or French ; but it would, perhaps, be asking too much to demand that the divinity of a barbarous people and age should inspire his prophets with thoughts as grand, and language as appropriate and forcible as are to be found in the sublime flights of Goethe, Shakspeare, or Milton.

§ 109. The laws of Moses are much inferior in every important respect to many other codes. They are neither clear, comprehensive, nor beneficent. They are vile in spirit and poor in execution. A great portion of the Mosaic law is taken up with directions for the most trifling observances,—directions which were evidently written by priests, whose religion consisted in ceremony, and nothing more. Consider the following :—

“ And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord ; and of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed [of leprosy], and upon the thumb of the right hand, and upon the great toe of the right foot.” *Lev. XIV.* 16, 17.

Jehovah ordered Ezekiel to lie on his left side, without turning, for three hundred and ninety days, to make bread of wheat and barley and beans and lentils and millet and fitches, mixed together, and to “ bake it with dung that cometh out of man” in the sight of the Jews, and he should eat just twenty shekels of meat each day, and drink just the sixth part of a hin, neither more nor less. Ezekiel remonstrated against this hard fare, and Jehovah, as an especial favor, allowed him to take cow’s dung instead of man’s dung. *Ezek. IV.* 12–15.

Jehovah ordered Hosea, in very coarse language, to marry a harlot, and the prophet, with commendable obedience, did so. *Hosea, I.* 2, 3.

Jeremiah (*LI.* 63) wrote, “ And it shall be when thou hast made an end of reading this book that thou shalt bind

a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates." Harsh treatment that, for the Word of God.

The Levitical priest was made holy "by the blood of a ram being put on the tip of the right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot." *Lev. VIII. 23.*

"Thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon; and it shall be when thou shalt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee." *Deut. XXIII. 13.*

Really, it does seem that Jehovah is rather overdoing his business as a lawgiver; he is "running it into the ground," as the Western slang has it.

"The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people that this man was born there" [in Jerusalem]. *Ps. LXXXVII. 5.*

He will surely think twice before he damns any native of that place.

In the twenty-fourth chapter of *Exodus* there is the following account:—

And Jehovah said to Moses, 'Come up unto me, thou and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship afar off. * * Then went up Moses, and Aaron, and Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under his feet a pavement of lucid sapphire, clear as the very heavens. And on the chief men of Israel He laid not his hand; and they saw God; and they ate and drank. And Jehovah said to Moses 'Come up to me upon the mount, and there remain, and I will give you tables of stone, with the law and commandments which I have written, that thou mayst teach the people. * * And the glory of Jehovah abode on Mount Sinai, and a cloud covered it for six days; and the seventh day He called Moses from the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of Jehovah was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain, in the view of the children of Israel. And Moses entered into the midst of the cloud and ascended the mountain, and Moses was upon the mountain forty days and forty nights. And Jehovah spake to Moses, saying"—

Before proceeding further, let us consider that, according to the history we are about to listen, as it were, to the very words of God, addressed to that minister with whom he "spoke as man to man." After all this tremendous solemnity of preparation, after having been summoned into the visible presence of the Deity, after having seen God and

lived, what must have been the expectation of the elders of Israel respecting the momentous import of the divine communication? Let us imagine that some of their number had formed just and enlarged conceptions of God, and had speculated upon the condition and prospects of mankind. They must have been looking earnestly for some revelation, which would send a stream of light through the darkness that rested upon the world; which would disclose to their erring and suffering race new revelations and new hopes; which should raise man, in his moral nature, nearer to the author of his being; which should be listened to with intense interest, wherever made known, by all human beings, in all ages to come. What, then, was the communication?

“And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying ‘Tell the children of Israel to bring me an offering. From every one whose heart is willing to give, ye shall take my offering. And these are the offerings, which ye shall take from them: gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goat’s hair, and ram’s skins dyed red, and seal’s skins, and setim wood, oil for the lamps, aromatics for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense; onyx stones, and other stones, to be set in the ephod and breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them. Ye shall make it according to the pattern of the tabernacle, and all its utensils which I show thee. They shall make an ark of setim wood, two cubits and a half in length, and a cubit and a half in breadth, and a cubit and a half in height: and thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and without thou shalt overlay it: and thou shalt make a moulding of gold about it.” *Ex. XXIV.*

“Seven chapters,” says Norton, “are filled with directions as trivial. So wholly unconnected are they with any moral, or religious sentiment, or any truth, important, or unimportant—except the melancholy fact of their having been regarded as a divine communication—that it requires a strong effort to read through with attention these pretended words of the Infinite Being. The natural tendency of a belief that such words proceeded from Him, wherever this belief prevailed, must have been to draw away the regard of the Jews from all that is worthy of man as a moral and intellectual being, and to fix it on the humblest objects of superstition.”

§ 110. In writing this book, as a passionate attack on the Bible, I have sought to use every available weapon,

and particularly such as were offered to me by that book itself : but there is one weapon which I see clearly, and could handle easily, and yet dare not use : my courage fails me, when I approach the vulgar and obscene passages of the Old Testament. I cannot quote them : I will not venture even to insert a list of the texts referring to them all : but to justify myself for having mentioned the subject at all, I shall merely call the reader's attention to the twentieth verse of the twenty-third chapter of *Ezekiel*, which, in the disgusting grossness of its obscenity, far exceeds anything that can be found in *Don Juan*, or *La Pucelle*. Indeed, Voltaire and Byron are models of decency and delicacy as compared with Ezekiel. I have heard of an expurgated edition of *Don Juan* published for the benefit of young ladies ; but I would suggest that the expurgation of that book will be of little use to protect their refinement of delicacy, so long as they are in habit of reading an unexpurgated Bible. The Catholics, with a better sense than the Protestants, of what is proper for young persons and those who have warm imaginations, do not permit them to read the Sacred Scriptures, and thus, they keep the natural sweetness of humanity far from the contagious corruption of the obscene images of the Hebrew prophets.

The amorous poetry of the Scriptures is very good in its kind. The *Song of Solomon* is a poetical conversation between a lover (the king himself), and his beloved—one of his numerous wives, or concubines. The lover says to his beloved “Thou hast dove's eyes ;” “thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn ;” “thy lips are like a thread of scarlet ;” “thy neck is as a tower of ivory ;” “thy two breasts are like two young roes ;” “thy belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies ;” “thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor ;” “the joints of thy thighs are like jewels ;” “the smell of thy garments [petticoats ?] is as the smell of Lebanon ;” “thy stature is like to a palm-tree ;” “I will go up to the palm-tree, and take hold of the boughs thereof ;” “and until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.” Bravo for Solomon ! Neither is his beloved taken at random, nor is she chosen to mortify the flesh : through he has “three score

queens, and four score concubines, and virgins without number," yet she is more lovely than they all, "the fairest among women."

She replies to his amorous address : "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand" ; "his locks are bushy and black as a raven" ; "his eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and fitly set" ; "his cheeks are as a bed of spices ;" "his lips like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh" ; "his hands are as gold-rings set with beryl" ; "his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires" ; "his legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold" ; "his mouth is most sweet" ; "yea, he is altogether lovely" ; "his love is better than wine" ; "a bundle of myrrh is my beloved unto me ; he shall lie all night between my breasts." "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a young roe, or to a young hart upon a mountain of spices." "Let us get up early to the vineyards" ; "there will I give thee my loves." "My beloved is mine, and I am his : he feedeth among the lilies." "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste" ; "his left hand was under my head and his right hand did embrace me" ; "he brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love : stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love." Bravo for Solomon's mistress ! Well done for both of them !

Well done too for the Christian theologians, who, as a body, have found their intellects and consciences sufficiently elastic to enable them to assert with a sanctimonious gravity, that this song is purely allegorical in its meaning,—Christ being the lover and the Church his beloved, who in speaking of each other's "bellies" mean merely to express their delights in the ways of godliness.

"But" as Drs. D'Oyly and Mant confess, in their Notes on the Bible, "though the work be certainly an allegorical representation, many learned men, in an unrestrained eagerness to explain the *Song*, even in its minutest and most obscure particulars, have too far indulged their imaginations ; and by endeavoring too nicely to reconcile the literal with the spiritual sense, have been led beyond the boundaries which a reverence for the sacred writings

should ever prescribe. The ideas which the sacred writers furnish concerning the mystical relation between Christ and his Church, though very well accommodated to our apprehensions by the allusion of a marriage union, are too general to illustrate every particular contained in this poem ; which may be supposed to have been intentionally decorated with some ornaments appropriate to the literal construction. When the general analogy is obvious, we are not always to expect minute resemblance, and should not be too curious in seeking for obscure and recondite allusions. Solomon, in the glow of an inspired fancy, and unsuspecting of misconception or deliberate perversion [his inspiration not extending so far as that], describes God and his church, with their respective attributes and graces, under colorings familiar and agreeable to mankind, and exhibits their ardent affection under the authorized figures of earthly love. No similitude could indeed be chosen so elegant and apposite, for the illustration of this intimate and spiritual alliance, as a marriage union ; if considered in the chaste simplicity of its first institution, or under the interesting circumstances, with which it was established among the Jews."

"The books of scripture history and prophecy are very like one another," says Dr. Henry, "but this *Song of Solomon* is very unlike the songs of his father David. There is not the name of God in it : it is never quoted in the New Testament ; we find not in it any expressions of natural religion or pious devotion ; no, nor is it introduced by vision, or any of the marks of immediate revelation : it seems as hard as any part of scripture to be made 'a savor of life unto life' ; nay, and unto those, who come to the reading of it with carnal minds and corrupt affections, it is in danger of being made 'a savor of death unto death' ; it is a flower out of which they extract poison : and therefore the Jewish doctors advised their young people not to read it, till they were thirty years of age."

Dr. Adam Clarke with characteristic honesty and candor is disposed to confess that the thing is a mere love-song after all, and he adds, that "Eastern phraseology in such subjects is too vivid for European imagination. Let any sensible and pious medical man read over this book, and if at

all acquainted with Asiatic phraseology, say whether it would be proper, even in medical language, to explain all the descriptions and allusions of this poem." Poor, formula-worshipping Horne, is sadly pothered with such "revelations" as those of Solomon. He says "It has been objected that the *Song of Solomon* and the sixteenth and twenty-third chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy contain passages offensive to common decency. But this objection will fall to the ground by interpreting those parts allegorically." Precisely so ; and by a similar process, judiciously applied, the licentious stories of *Tom Jones*, the *Chevalier de Faublas* and Lewis' *Monk* might be converted into model tales for the edification of pious youth. Neither would the discovery of such allegorical meaning be without precedent, among either Gentiles or Jews. Gibbon informs us that "As the traditions of pagan mythology were variously related, the sacred interpreters were at liberty to select the most convenient circumstances, and as they translated an arbitrary cipher, they could extract from any fable, any sense which was adapted to their favorite system of religion and philosophy. The lascivious form of a naked Venus was tortured into the discovery of some moral precept or physical truth ; and the castration of Atys explained the revolution of the sun between the tropics or the separation of the human soul from vice and error."

There is a very funny but not very delicate story in the Vth and VIth chapters of the first book of *Samuel*. The Philistines had taken Jehovah's ark from the chosen people and they kept it for a long time. In the course of time they were taken with "emerods" or piles, and by some process of reasoning not clearly set forth in the Scriptures, they discovered that this disease was a punishment inflicted by the Jewish God upon them for keeping his ark, which they accordingly returned and with the ark they gave to the Lord golden figures, of the parts afflicted, representing faithfully the appearance of the disease. The Lord was apparently well pleased with the present, which was at least in good taste as the punishment he had inflicted on them.

§ 111. To read the Bible understandingly, requires much information, a knowledge of geography, history, chron-

ology, and the arts, besides the Hebrew and Greek languages, in which the books were originally written, and from which no translations have been made by divine authority. A man cannot read the Bible until he has learned his letters, and cannot appreciate its meaning until his mind has been educated to habits of thought by long training. And no matter how extensive the general literary education of a man may be, if he reads the Bible with inquisitive attention on what is before him, ten thousand questions must arise, for which he can obtain no satisfactory solution, except from extraneous sources. Far from being simple and clear, the Bible is the most equivocal in meaning of all books, as the multitude of sects may testify, which all seriously believe that their doctrines are taught in its pages. That is a very questionable divine revelation which is differently understood by different persons. The words "trinity" and "incarnation," are not in the Bible, and neither Jesus, nor the evangelists ever used the word "atonement," so far as we can learn. Did God Almighty not know what he was writing about, when he omitted to mention specially the doctrines, which were to serve as the corner and keystones of his church? Or did he intentionally leave his meaning in doubt, so as to furnish good cudgels for theological disputation, and Christian war and persecution? How, on the theory of the divinity and superhuman knowledge of Jesus, can the Christians explain the fact that he did not foresee and prevent the disputes of his followers in regard to the inspiration of Jewish books, which are now the subject of dispute? Why did he not describe the inspiration possessed by Moses and the prophets, and thus prevent serious quarrels? Why did Paul, or John not declare, which of the books, pretending to be inspired biographies of Jesus, or statements of his doctrine, had been composed at the dictation of the Holy Spirit? Why did not Jesus give a concise statement of his speculative and moral teaching, so that the churches might quote it as their "platform," instead of composing their contradictory confessions of faith, and thirty-nine articles? Is there anything in divine inspiration, which forbids composition according to the dictates of common sense? When an uninspired philosopher writes

a book, people generally know what he means. "There * are no sects in geometry and mathematics. When truth is evident, it is impossible to divide people into parties and factions. Nobody disputes that it is broad day at noon." Why must the principles of revealed religion be so obscure, when some of the truths discovered by unassisted human reason are so convincingly clear? Unrevealed truth has a great advantage over revelation itself.

Indeed, many of the most celebrated priests, have declared that the prophets and apostles wrote with two meanings—one apparent, the other hidden—one literal, the other figurative. If the literal meaning was foolish, or manifestly untrue, they could retreat to the figurative, and twist that in any way to suit themselves. Origen was one of the earliest Christian advocates of the double meaning, and he said that, "Were it necessary to attach ourselves to the letter, and to interpret the law after the manner of the Jews, or of the populace, I should blush to say aloud that it is God who has given us such laws; I should find even more grandeur and reason in human codes, such as those of the Athenians, Lacedæmonians, and Romans." In passages where no figurative interpretation will suffice, there it is seriously proposed to make the literal different from the apparent meaning. Professor Whewell, whose piety outruns his sense, gravely asks † "When should old interpretations [of Bible passages] be given up; what is the proper measure for a religious and enlightened commentator to make a change in the current interpretation of sacred Scripture? or, at what period ought the established exposition of a passage to be given up, and a new mode of understanding the passage, such as is, or seems to be required by new discoveries respecting the laws of nature, be accepted in its place? It is plain, that, to introduce such an alteration lightly and hastily, would be a procedure fraught with inconvenience; for, if the change were made in such a manner, it might be afterwards discovered, that it had been adopted without sufficient reason, and that it was necessary to reinstate the old exposition. And the minds of the readers of scripture, al-

* VOLTAIRE.

† Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences—Chapter on the relation of History to Palæontology.

ways to a certain extent, and for a time disturbed by the subversion of their long established notions, would be distressed without any need, and might be seriously unsettled. While, on the other hand, a too protracted and obstinate resistance to the innovation on the part of scriptural expositors, would tend to identify, at least in the minds of many, the authority of the scripture with the truth of the exposition, and therefore would bring discredit upon the revealed word, when the established interpretation was proved to be untenable."

§ 112. Though there are many objectionable moral doctrines in the Bible—though its doctrines are not original—though many passages, if blindly received, would fill the mind with superstition—though many other passages are grossly obscene—though much of it is occupied with mere trash of absurdities and repetitions—yet I do not deny that the book has considerable merits, and I must confess myself to have read much of it with pleasure. There is a devout and simple spirit in many passages, which comes "home" to a man who has a sense of his duties to his fellow-man. I would desire to have the better portions of it placed within the reach of every man and child, that they might read it not blindly, but with an eye open for its merits. Many a one weary and sore laden with the burdens of life, may there find rest and sympathy in the religiousness of a former age. The merits, too, of the English translation of the Bible are considerable. The style is unpretending, simple, clear, forcible, and beautiful.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BIBLICAL BOOKS NOT GENUINE.

"With few exceptions, there is not an entire book in the whole of the Old Testament, with respect to which we can determine, with complete accuracy, who was the author."—MORELL.

§ 113. It is but reasonable to anticipate that, if a book were offered to us as a revelation, written by a man according to the dictation of a deity, we should know who that man was. And our knowledge should not be mere matter of supposition, but should be based on strong positive evidence. Much of the credit of a book depends upon the man from whom it comes, and if he be unknown to us, we must doubt his trustworthiness. This question of the genuineness of the books of the Bible is an important one, and very different from the question whether the works ascribed to Thucydides, or Homer, were really written by such persons as Thucydides and Homer are represented in our books to have been. The poetry of the *Iliad* is equally pleasing to us, whether we know the author's name, or not. The discovery that he wrote to gratify a tyrant, to flatter a friend, to slander an enemy, or to falsify history would not destroy the value of his poem, which depends for its rank upon its merit as a work of art. In regard to Thucydides, the knowledge that he had written his history falsely, would detract from its value; but provided it be true, we care little how base his motives, or what the name of the writer, or his place of residence. So, too, as the question at issue is different, and more important, we want much stronger evidence to convince us fully of the truth of the alleged authorship of the Hebrew Scriptures. There is also much greater reason for us to doubt the genuineness of an ancient book, claiming to have been written by divine inspiration, than of a work offered to the public as an uninspired history or poem: because we know that there have been comparatively many more forgeries of alleged book-revelations than of histories and poems, and because we know that the

motives are stronger to induce forgery, of works of the former class than of the latter. Very few instances are recorded in which large books strictly historical, have been forged, and their authorship ascribed to famous personages of more ancient times : whereas many forgeries of books, intended to establish religious systems, or to teach religious doctrines, are mentioned in history. The inducements to forge religious books, are greater, and the probability of detection less : for, doubt of the word of the priests in early ages, was a greater offense by far than it is now : and thus their books were protected against hostile examination : whereas poems and histories are protected from no scrutiny, however severe. The knowledge that the poem, or history is spurious, and that the writer was a dishonest man, will not necessarily destroy the value of his work : his poetry may still be beautiful, or his facts instructive. But genuineness is an essential quality in a book-revelation : unless it be genuine, it can be nothing more than a mere human work.

The unlearned Christians believe every part of the Bible to be unquestionably genuine ; and they think any doubt on the subject to be very sinful. But the doubters have very illustrious examples in the orthodox Christian church, particularly among the Protestants. Many of the most learned believers in Jesus, during the first four centuries of the Christian era, rejected as spurious various books now received in the New Testament Canon. Luther questioned the genuineness or truthfulness of the Books of *Chronicles*, *Job*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Esther*, *Isaiah*, *Hebrews*, and *Revelations*. Neander and Arnold denied the genuineness of much of *Daniel* ; Calvin, Grotius, Erasmus, and Neander doubted whether Peter was the writer of the Second Epistle, which bears his name ; and Zuinglius and Erasmus did not give full credit to *Revelations*. Origen, who was the first learned Christian of critical ability, and who undoubtedly had much information which is now forever lost, expressed doubts of the genuineness of the books known to us as the *Hebrews*, second epistle of *James*, second of *Peter*, second and third of *John*, and *Jude*. He also considered the book of *Hermas* as an inspired book. After Origen, in order of time and trustworthiness as a critic, comes Eusebius (300, A.D.),

who says that among the books, the genuineness of which were a matter of dispute in his age, are *James*, *Jude*, second *Peter*, and second and third *John*. When such men as these might doubt, surely Christians of to-day may also have their doubts.

"That* the Old Testament is not the forgery of a single impostor is proved by every page. What variety in language and expression ! Isaiah does not write like Moses, nor Jeremiah like Ezekiel, and between these and the minor prophets, there is again a great diversity of style. The style of Moses is distinguished by its scrupulous, grammatical correctness ; the book of *Judges* is filled with provincialisms and barbarisms ; in *Isaiah* we meet with old words under new inflections ; *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* have their Chaldaisms ; and in short, as we trace the succession of writers from the earlier to the later ages, we find in the language a gradual decline, till it finally sinks into a dialect of broad Chaldee. Then, too, what diversity in the march of ideas, and range of imagery ! In the hand of Moses and Isaiah the harp is deep and loud, but its tone is softer when touched by David. The muse of Solomon is decked in the splendors of a luxurious court, while her sister wanders, with David, in an artless dress, by streams and banks, through the fields, and among flocks. One poet is original like Isaiah, Joel, and Habbakuk ; another is imitative like Ezekiel. One strikes out the untrodden path of genius, while another strolls by his side in the beaten foot-way. Rays of learning beam from one, while his neighbor never emits a spark of literature. In the oldest writers we see strong lines of Egyptian tint, which grow fainter and fainter on the canvass of their successors, and at last disappear. Finally, in the manners, what a beautiful gradation ! At first all is simple and unaffected, as in the poems of Homer, and among the Bedouin Arabs at the present day. By degrees this noble simplicity declines into luxury and effeminacy, and vanishes at last in the luxury of the court of Solomon. Nowhere is there a violent transition, but a gradual and progressive course throughout."

* EICHORN Translated by Edward Everett, in his reply to G. B. English against Christianity.

§ 114. The *Pentateuch*, as the first five books of the Bible are called, claims Moses for its author (*Deut. XXXI. 9*), and was repeatedly accredited as genuine by Jesus. The Christians argue that the *Pentateuch* must be genuine because it was the code of ecclesiastical and political law of the Jewish nation, and represents itself as having been given to them by Moses, and to have been accepted in his time. Now, laws are not readily changed, and it is absurd to suppose that if Moses had given them no law, they would have submitted in a subsequent age to a strange and complex code which claimed for itself to have been given to them by him. Such conduct would be unexampled and incredible. As a nation, they must always have had laws, and if we believe that the *Pentateuch* is spurious, we must believe that they not only accepted the strange law, but that they discarded their previous code. We can trace the history of the Jews back to a very remote period, and we do not discover any traces of any other code. Besides, the nation had a number of religious observances,—some of them very singular ones,—and their origin is accounted for in the *Pentateuch*. These accounts were considered to be correct by the Hebrews, in every age, of which we have any knowledge, and their traditions, on such points, must deserve much credit. Such solemn religious observances as the Circumcision, the Passover, the Feast of the Tabernacles, and the Sabbath could not be instituted on slight occasions, nor would the account of their origin be likely to be entirely lost from tradition. The mere fact that the *Pentateuch* was ascribed to Moses, by the Jews, in all ages, is proof of the fact as complete as we have for the genuineness of most very ancient documents.

But, on the other hand, there are many reasons for denying the authorship of the *Pentateuch* to any one man who lived fifteen centuries before Jesus, derived from an examination of the book itself; and there are other reasons to be derived from later Jewish history for denying that it was known or received as law during a large period of the Hebrew monarchy. Shortly before the Babylonish Captivity, it appears that a book called the Law of Moses, which was probably the *Pentateuch*, or a portion of it, was found in the Temple by a high priest, who had never heard of such a

book or such a law (2. K. XXII., 2. Ch. XXXIV). He carried it to the king, who had been on the throne for eighteen years, and he had never heard of such a book or such a law. But the monarch seems to have felt that this was no common book ; he, apparently, felt that his people had committed a serious offence by having been ignorant of it ; "he rent his clothes ;" and he said to the priest "Go and inquire of the Lord for me and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that are found." The reply given by the oracles of Jehovah appears to have been to the effect that this was a genuine revelation from heaven, written by an ancient and famous chief of the nation, and that it was the duty of the Hebrews to receive it as their code of moral, civil and ecclesiastical law. When we examine the Jewish history previous to the discovery of this book, we discover few traces of any laws given by Moses ; and no satisfactory evidences of the possession of such a book as the *Pentateuch*. "The author* of the book of *Kings* relates that after the discovery of the book of the Law, in the reign of Josiah, a passover was celebrated in Jerusalem, and adds 'Such a passover had not been kept from the time of the Judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah' (2. K. XXII. 22). With the exception of what is found in the *Pentateuch* itself this is the only mention of the keeping of the passover in any historical book of earlier date than the *Chronicles* (written after the captivity) ; nor is there in the *Prophets*, who wrote before the captivity, any distinct allusion to what afterwards became the great national festival. If the writer of the book of *Kings* meant to say that so splendid a passover had not been celebrated before, not even in the days of Solomon, this would be almost equivalent to saying that no passover had been celebrated at all. If his meaning were that the rites of the ceremonial-law were more strictly observed than they had been before, the remark must imply, that they were then, for the first time, fully observed since the days of the Judges.

"In the book of *Nehemiah*, written more than a thousand years after the [alleged date of the] death of Moses, there is a mention of the celebration of the Feast of the Taberna-

* NORRON. Genuineness of the Gospels.

cles : and in speaking of it, the writer says, ' Since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun, to that day, had not the children of Israel done so' (*Neh. VII.*). ' We see,' says the learned Joseph Mede, ' how expressly the Feast of Tabernacles was commanded yearly to be observed. Nevertheless, which is past all belief, it was never kept, at least in the main circumstance of dwelling in booths, from the time of Joshua, till after the return from the captivity.' Le Clerc remarks that ' this law [concerning the Feast of the Tabernacle] was neither obscure nor hard to be observed. But, as I have often said, the laws of Moses were never accurately observed.' The national festivals, appointed by a ceremonial law, are, of all its ordinances, the least likely to be neglected.

" The writer of the book of *Chronicles* himself gives us to understand (2 *Ch. XXXVI.* 21) that the seventy years of the captivity answered to seventy sabbatical years, which had not been kept. If, as is implied in what is said, the sabbatical year had not been observed for between four and five centuries preceding the captivity—that is for more than five centuries before the time of the writer—there is little reason to believe that any evidence then existed of its ever having been observed. With the sabbatical years, the years of jubilee were intimately connected, and if there were no sabbatical year, we cannot reasonably suppose that there were any years of jubilee. Yet the laws, regarding the sabbatical years and the jubilee, are among the most important of those concerning the rights of property, and at the same time are represented to have been intimately interwoven with the theocratical government of the Jews, as implying a periodical miracle."

" According to a law in *Leviticus* (*XVII.* 3–9), it was enjoined, under a severe penalty, that there should be no sacrifices only where the Tabernacle was placed. According to another law in *Deuteronomy* (*XII.* 2–14), after the Jews were established in Palestine, one place of national worship was to be designated, where alone sacrifices were to be offered. * * But it does not appear elsewhere from the early Jewish history, extending down to the building of Solomon's Temple, that such laws existed ; on the contrary, altars were raised, and sacrifices offered by holy men in various places, and in places where the Tabernacle

was not, and such facts are related without censure by the historian." Thus, Samuel sacrificed at Mizpah (1 S. VII. 5-9), while the Tabernacle was at Nob (1 S. XXI. XXII), and Solomon sacrificed at Gibeon, because "that was the great high place."

The writers of the earlier books of the Bible appear to be ignorant of the *Pentateuch*. Jesus and the Evangelists made very frequent appeal to, and numerous quotations from the Mosaic books, but the Hebrew prophets previous to the captivity do not. "It is incredible* that these books, if written by Moses and carrying with them the authority of God, should not have been appealed to by the prophets, the public teachers of the religion of God, who ought to have made them the basis of their instructions. Nor is it probable that they should have come so near perishing as to be saved only by a providential discovery, just before the nation fell into ruin and captivity. The tradition of the Jews, that no copy of them was extant on the return of the nation from their captivity, favors much more the supposition that they had their origin after that event than the supposition which ascribes them to Moses. And if it appear that before that event fundamental ordinances of the Levitical law were not observed, and even that individuals specially favored by Heaven, acted contrary to them, without censure from God or Man, it affords a presumption, more or less strong, that the Levitical law had not God for its author, nor Moses for the organ of its communication."

There are many archæological expressions in the *Pentateuch* which were evidently not written until after the time of Moses.

"And he [Jehovah] buried him [Moses] in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." *Deut. XXXIV. 6.*

"At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day." *Deut. X. 8.*

"The Canaanite was then [in the time of Abraham] in the land." *Gen. XII. 6. XIII. 7.*

"Ye shall keep my statutes * * that the land spue not you

out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you." *Lev. XVIII. 26. 28.*

"And Moses said unto Aaron 'Take a pot and put an omer of manna therein.' * * Now an omer [an ancient measure] is the tenth part of an ephah." *Ex. XVI. 33. 36.*

There are also many anachronisms, of which a writer in the position of Moses could not have been guilty :—

"These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." *Gen. XXXVI. 31.*

Hebron mentioned in *Genesis (XIII. 18)* was a modern name (*Josh. XIV. 15. XV. 13*), probably given in honor of the grandson of Caleb (*1. Ch. II. 41*). Dan is spoken of as the extreme limit of the land of Gilead (*Deut. XXXIV. 1. Gen. XIV. 14*); but the place was not called Dan until the time of the Judges (*Jud. XVIII. 29*). Jair is mentioned in *Deuteronomy (III. 14.)* as being known by that name "unto this day;" but according to the book of *Judges (X. 3. 4.)*, the place was named from Jair who judged Israel long after Moses.

There is another class of anachronisms concerning the Mosaic law itself. The commandments are spoken of as well known (*Gen. XXVI. 5. ; Ex. XVI. 28*) before they were given (*Ex. XX*). Priests are spoken of as recognised ministers of Jehovah (*Gen. XIV. 18. 20. Ex. XXI. 22*) before the *Pentateuch* gives any account of the establishment of a priesthood with divine authority. The Tabernacle is mentioned as in existence (*Ex. XXXIV. 34. 35*), and afterwards we hear of its construction (*Ex. XXXVI. XL*). The Levites are spoken of as having landed estates (*Lev. XXV. 32. 34*), which they did not acquire till long afterwards (*Num. XXXV. 1-5*). Noah was told to make a distinction between clean and unclean beasts, though the ordinance in reference to unclean meats was given in the Levitical law as something new.

These passages were evidently not written by Moses. No writer would use the phrase "the Canaanite was *then* in the land," till he was driven out and that did not happen till long after the time of Moses. Neither did the land "spue out the nations that were before" the Jews, until long after his time. Neither could he have given a list of the kings

who reigned in Edom previous to the time of Saul. Most of the Christian commentators on the Bible admit that these passages are not genuine, but assert that they were interpolated by transcribers, though they can produce no evidence to sustain their assertion. They admit the spuriousness of a few passages for the sake of being able to assert the genuineness of the rest.

Genesis appears on a close examination to be a compilation of two older documents, containing similar accounts of the creation, the deluge, the generations of men, and the history of the Jewish patriarchs. These two ancient documents are marked by many differences of style, and are called the "Jehovistic" and the "Elohistic" because they respectively entitle the Deity "Jehovah" or "Jehovah-Elohim," and "Elohim,"—the former translated "Lord" or "Lord God" and the latter "God," in the English Bible. In the beginning of *Genesis*, we can plainly trace the two old documents. The Elohistic paper begins and tells how Elohim (God) created the heaven and the earth in six days, with the work of each day ; how on the fifth day he made "the waters bring forth abundantly" all kinds of fishes and fowls : how on the sixth day he made the "earth bring forth" all beasts, cattle, and creeping things ; how he created man and women together, "in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them ;" and how Elohim finally saw that his work was good and rested on the seventh day. Every time the Deity is mentioned in this account (*Gen. I. 1–II. 3*) he is styled "God" in the English version. After the story of Creation has been told thus completely we find that at the fourth verse of the second chapter, another account begins "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God [Jehovah Elohim] made the earth and the heavens ;" and in the following twenty verses we have his story of creation. He knows nothing about distinct days of creation. He says the fowls were made out of the ground, simultaneously with the land animals, places the creation of Adam before that of the brutes, and concludes by giving Eve to Adam as a supplement. The improbability that both accounts were written by one man, and that man an inspired prophet,

will appear evident to any one who will read the two chapters attentively.

These "Jehovistic" and "Elohistic" documents can be traced without difficulty through *Genesis*, and many traces of them are found in other portions of the *Pentateuch*. Both documents are evidently records of Jewish traditions, but the writer had not received the traditions in the same shape. They are the cause of a number of discrepancies and repetitions, which the compiler, who patches the work together, did not see fit to correct. Thus, the Jehovistic legend (*Gen. IV. 16-24*) says that the descendants of Cain, Adam's eldest son, were Enoch, Irad, Mehujael, Methusael and Lamech; while, the Elohistic compiler, speaking as though he had never heard that Adam had such a son as Cain, says (*Gen. V. 3-26*) that Seth's descendants were Enos, Cainaan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methusaleh and Lamech. It is evident that the same legendary personages were referred to, but credited to different parents. Noah is directed by Elohim to take two of every species of animal into the ark (*Gen. VI. 19, 20*); but Jehovah directs him to take pairs of unclean beasts and sevens of clean beasts (*Gen. VII. 2*). The story of the deluge is twice told. One of the most remarkable repetitions is in regard to the appropriation of the wife of one of the patriarchs by a foreign monarch. When Abram was seventy-five years old (*Gen. XII. 4*), and Sarai his wife was sixty-five (*Gen. XVII. 17*), they were about to enter Egypt; and the father of the faithful, knowing that there is no accounting for tastes, and suspecting that the King of Egypt would be likely to fall in love with Sarai, bethought him that it would be a reasonable precaution to pretend that she was his sister. Having laid his plans, the patriarch entered Egypt, and as he expected the fame of the old lady's loveliness reached the ears of the monarch; and he took her into his harem without opposition; but "the Lord plagued Pharoah and his house with great plagues," till he discovered that he was trespassing upon Abram's preserves (*Gen. XII. 10-19*), and he gave her up. Twenty-five years later, when Sarah was ninety years old, and after "it had ceased to be with her after the manner of women" (*Gen. XVIII. 11*), her beauty created such an excitement in Gerar that King Abimelech sent and took

her, Abraham having previously declared, as in Egypt, that she was his sister ; and in this case, too, the monarch was induced to send her back to her husband by the interposition of the Lord (*Gen. XX*). In each case the devout couple obtained a great store of presents for their complaisance. These are rather odd tales, but they appear still odder, when we read that another adventure of the same kind befell Rebekah, twenty or thirty years later, among the uncircumcised Philistines, who took her, on Isaac's representation, that she was his sister (*Gen. XXVI*). These are evidently confused accounts of the same legend. According to the Elohist paper, Esau sold his birth-right to Jacob for a mess of pottage (*Gen. XXV. 27-35*), while the Jehovistic author says that Jacob got the birth-right by deceiving his father (*Gen. XXXVII. 1-40*). There is a discrepancy between the two documents in regard to the cause of the institution of the Sabbath.

"In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." *Ex. XX. 11.*

Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out of thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm ; *therefore* the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day." *Deut. V. 15.*

The following columns give the most important divisions of the Elohist and Jehovistic papers ; and upon comparison of the passages many contradictions and awkward repetitions may be found.

	ELOHISTIC.	JEHOVISTIC.
Creation.....	<i>Gen. I. 1-II. 3...</i>	<i>Gen. II. 4-III. 24.</i>
Genealogies.....	" <i>V. 1-32....</i>	" <i>IV. 1-26.</i>
Deluge.....	" <i>VI. 9-22...</i>	" <i>VI. 1-8; VII. 1-5.</i>
Deluge.....	" <i>VII. 11-16..</i>	" <i>VII. 17. 23.</i>
Rainbow.....	" <i>IX. 1-17...</i>	" <i>VIII. 20-22.</i>
Noah.....	" <i>IX. 28.....</i>	" <i>IX. 20-27.</i>
Genealogies.....	" <i>XI. 10-26..</i>	" <i>X.</i>
Abraham's Covenantant.....	" <i>XVII.</i>	" <i>XV.</i>
Sodom.....	" <i>XIX. 29...</i>	" <i>XIX. 1-28. 30-38.</i>
Seizure of wife..	" <i>XX.....</i>	" <i>XII. 10-19, XXVI. 1-11</i>
Isaac and Ishmael	" <i>XXI. 1-21..</i>	" <i>XVI.</i>
Abimelech.....	" <i>XXI. 22-34</i>	" <i>XXVI. 26-33.</i>
Abraham tempted	" <i>XXII. 1-13</i>	" <i>XXII. 14-18.</i>

	ELOHISTIC.	JEHOVISTIC.
Abraham tempted	<i>Gen.</i> XXIII.	<i>Gen.</i>
Abraham tempted	" XXV. 1-18.	
Isaac's marriage.	" XXV. 19-21.	
	24-26.	" XXIV. XV. 22. 23.
Esau.....	" XXV. 27-35.	" XXVII. 1-40.
Esau.....	" XXVII. 46;	
	XXVIII. 9..	" XXVII. 41-45
Quails.....	<i>Ex.</i> XVI.....	<i>Ex.</i> XI.
Commandments..	" XX. 1-13...	<i>Deut.</i> V. 6-21.
Lord and Moses.	" VI. 30 ; VII.	
	12.	<i>Ex.</i> IV. 10-16.
Horeb.....	<i>Num.</i> XX. 1-13...	" XVII. 1-7.

Leviticus is principally Elohistie : the fragmentary character of *Numbers* may be easily discovered ; and *Deuteronomy* is mostly Jehovistic. De Wette and many other very able Biblical critics think that the Elohistie document was written about 1000 B. C., and the Jehovistic paper somewhat later.

The evidence that the editor of the *Pentateuch* did not write the book as we have it, but used older documents, is so strong, as set forth by those who have discussed the matter thoroughly, that few Christian authors venture to say anything against it. Among those who have recognized the patchwork are Whately, Morell, Palfrey, Kenrick, Norton, Parker, Eichhorn, Bauer, Astruc, Vater, Ewald, Von Bohlen, and DeWette. Horne in the earlier editions of his *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures* says that "To this hypothesis [of patchwork] there is but *one* objection, and we apprehend this is a fatal one : namely, the total silence of Moses as to any documents consulted by him." Again he says "If this be admitted [that the Spirit of God directed Moses in the choice of the facts recorded in his work] it is of no consequence whether Moses compiled the book of *Genesis* from annals preserved in the family of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or wrote the whole of it by immediate inspiration." "In the last edition (Dec., 1856), however of Horne's book, which has always been considered as one of the valuable orthodox text-books, it is confessed that only a small portion of the *Pentateuch* was written by Moses.

Palfrey, one of the most learned, able, candid, and up-

right of the Christian authors, acknowledges that *Genesis* is formed by the union of fragments ; but he contends that Moses was the editor, and intended it merely as an introduction to the four inspired books of the law. In giving this law to the Hebrews, Moses thought it proper to explain the history of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, " what communications they had received from the Deity," what title they had to Canaan, from which they were about to expel other nations, and what was the origin of the religious observances of the Jewish patriarchs. All the information necessary on these points he found in old traditions, which he accepted and published as he found them. " If we assume Moses to have been divinely instructed in what he recorded in *Genesis*," says Palfrey, " we do it altogether without authority from him. Communications received from the Deity, and recorded in the later books of the *Pentateuch*, he announces as such, saying repeatedly, ' The Lord spake unto Moses,' and ' The Lord said unto me.' But neither this language, nor any equivalent, anywhere occurs in *Genesis*. The reasons of the case would not justify the supposition. The introduction of a pure [!] religious system into an idolatrous world is proper matter for direct revelation, nor without such revelation could Moses or any other man become possessed of it. Not so with historical materials. On the one hand, the need of them is not so urgent ; and on the other, it is the common course of things for them to be collected and handed down in a more or less pure and trustworthy state. Each age instructs its successor ; nor is it to be doubted that notices, such as they were, of earlier times, existed in the time of Moses, as in every other period since there was anything to record or report. The actual existence of such notices before Moses' time, is referred to on the face of the record. Different parts of the composition are marked by varieties of style and language, effectually distinguishing them from one another, and indicating that they had several sources. The contents of such parts are sometimes of a nature to show that they not only had not a common origin, but that they were not elaborated by Moses, when they had come into his hands, so as to make one consecutive and consistent narrative. I think we shall have occasion to own that different portions, distinguished by diversities of style referred

to, sometimes repeat, and sometimes—which is of more consequence—contradict each other.” Let it be remarked in regard to Palfrey’s theory, that—

1. It is the only standing point left for educated men pretending to believe in the divine inspiration of the Bible.

2. The theory was not advanced till it became impossible to defend the assertion that Moses was the sole author of *Genesis*.

3. It convicts Moses of having incorporated falsehood in the Holy Scriptures, and of having done his task as editor badly.

4. It reduces the accounts of the creation, the fall of man, the great age of the antediluvians, the marriage of the sons of God with the daughters of men, the deluge, the confusion of tongues, the destruction of Sodom, the choice of Abraham and the institution of circumcision, to mere fables: and if man did not fall by Adam, he cannot be saved by Jesus.

5. It proves that Jesus frequently erred in accrediting the writings of Moses as divinely inspired.

Critics say that the style of the *Pentateuch* is too polished for so rude a people as the Jews were fifteen centuries before Christ, and that it bears a close resemblance in style to works written in the time of David. De Wette says, “The opinion that Moses composed these books is not only opposed by all the signs of a later date, which occur in the book itself, but also by the entire analogy of the history of Hebrew literature and language. But even admitting it was probable, on account of the influence the *Pentateuch* had on the language of the Hebrews, and on account of the analogy of the Syriac and Arabic languages, that during a period of nearly a thousand years the Hebrew language had changed as little as it would appear on this hypothesis, from the slight difference between the style of the *Pentateuch* and other books of the Old Testament, even the latest of them—still, even then it would be absurd to suppose that one man could have created beforehand the epico-historical, the rhetorical and poetic styles in all their extent and compass, and have perfected these three departments of Hebrew literature, both in form and substance, so far that all subsequent writers found nothing left for them,

but to follow in his steps." Thus much for the question whether Moses wrote the *Pentateuch*.

§ 115. The book known as the book of *Joshua* claims to have been written by that chieftain (*XXIV.* 26), but the claim is not sustained by any satisfactory evidence, while there is a large amount of testimony to show that Joshua could not have been the author. The book remarks (*VI.* 27) that Joshua's fame was noised throughout all the country : a mode of expression in regard to self in very bad taste for a mere human writer, but much worse if it pretended to have been written by divine inspiration. Luz is mentioned (*XVI.* 2), but Luz was not built till after the death of Joshua (*Jud.* *I.* 26). The children of Dan are said to have taken Leshem (*XIX.* 47), but that place (Laish), is said in *Judges* (*XVIII.* 27, 29) to have been taken long after. Debir was twice conquered and destroyed, according to Joshua (*X.* 38, 39, and *XV.* 17) : and, much later, it was again subjected to the same operation (*Jud.* *I.* 11, 13). The book represents Joshua as twice taking Hebron, and destroying it and its inhabitants.

" Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him unto Hebron ; and they fought against it, and they took it and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein ; he left none remaining (according to all that he had done to Eglon), but destroyed it utterly and all the souls that were therein." *Josh.* *X.* 36. 37.

" And at that time came Joshua and cut off the Anakims [giants] from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel." *Josh.* *XI.* 21.

Caleb said unto Joshua " Now, therefore, give me this mountain [Hebron] * * if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them [the Anakims] out. * * And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi." *Josh.* *XIV.* 12. *XV.* 14.

" Now, after the death of Joshua, it came to pass that * * Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron, and they slew Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmi." *Jud.* *I.* 1. 10.

The Jebusites and children of Judah are represented in *Joshua* (*XV.* 63), as dwelling together in Jerusalem to *this day*, whereas it is a well known fact that Jerusalem was not conquered till the time of David (2 *S.* *V.* 5 ; 1 *Ch.*

XI. 4). We are not informed that the children of Judah dwelt any considerable time in Jerusalem before the conquest ; and they could not possibly have dwelt there long before Joshua, as the phrase " to this day " would lead us to believe. The book of *Jasher* is mentioned (*Josh. X. 31*) as authority for the miraculous arrest of the sun ; but that book could not have been written till after the time of David. 2 *S. I. 18*.

§ 116. Christian writers do not pretend to know either the author, or date of the book of *Judges*. The history of the son of Joash appears to have been derived from two separate documents : in one (*VI. 11–VIII. 28*) he is styled Gideon : and in the other (*IX.*) he is called Jerubbaal. In one place it is stated that Judah took Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron with their coasts (*I. 18*), and elsewhere it is asserted that the Canaanites, the Zidonians, and five lords of the Philistines were still in those places (*III. 1–31*). The sentence " In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did what was right in his own eyes," could scarcely have been written before the time of Saul.

§ 117. The books of *Samuel*, originally but one book, do not profess, and are not claimed to have been written by the prophet Samuel, but appear to be named after him, because the record is mainly occupied with his acts, and the history of the Jews during his lifetime. The numerous contradictions appear to show that the book is a compilation or collection of old documents. Samuel anointed Saul king by divine command (1 *S. IX. 1–X. 16*), and the monarch is publicly confirmed in his dignity in consequence of his victory over the Ammonites (1 *S. XI.*) ; but elsewhere we are told that Samuel chose Saul king by lot, when driven by the demands of the people (1 *S. VIII. X. 17–27*), the prophet is dissatisfied with the establishment of the monarchy (*XII.*) and Jehovah declares that the people, by demanding a king, have rejected, not Samuel, but himself (*XII. 12*). The prophet's death is recorded twice (1 *S. XXV. 1. XXVIII. 3*). The Ziphites inform Saul that David is on the hill of Hachilah, on the south of the desert, (1 *S. XXIII. 19*), and afterwards they tell him that he is hidden in the hill of Hachilah in the east of the desert (1 *S. XXVI. 1*). David spares Saul's life in a cave (1 *S. XXIV*),

and afterwards in a camp (1. S. XXVI). The statement that "Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day" (1. S. XXVIII. 6), must have been written after the time of Solomon.

§ 118. The books of *Kings* give the history of the Hebrews from the accession of Solomon to the revolt of the ten tribes, the history of Judah till the time of the Captivity, and a partial history of Israel for 241 years after the Separation. The books were evidently written about the time of the Captivity. The author is unknown ; but there are passages or chapters which are copied to or from the book of *Isaiah*. Compare 2. K. XIX. 1-37 with Is. XXXVII. 1-38 ; and 2. K. XVIII. 13, 17-37 with Is. XXXVI. 1-22 ; and 2. K. XX. 12-21 with Is. XXXIX. 1-8. There are also passages which are copied to or from *Jeremiah*. Compare Jer. LII. with 2. K. XXIV-XXV. *Isaiah* certainly could not have written these books, for he died long before the Captivity ; nor could *Jeremiah*, for the concluding verses mention events which happened after his time.

§ 119. The books of *Chronicles* were written after the time of the Captivity, probably about 500 B. C. But the list of descendants of Jehoakim, brother of King Zedekiah (1. Ch. III.), extending twelve generations beyond the return from the Captivity, must have been written as late as 360 B. C. The author of the *Chronicles* is unknown. His dishonesty was mentioned in the chapter on *Contradictions*, and some specimens given of his compositions. A few more examples may be inserted here. As before remarked, the Chronicler loves to heighten the glory of David and his descendants, and to magnify the importance of the Levites and the Levitical religion. Thus he says (1. Ch. XI. 3) that David was anointed "according to the word of Jehovah;" and the Edomites and Libnah revolted from Jehoram "because he had forsaken the Lord God of his fathers." The book of *Kings* does not express these ideas in the parallel passages. The latter book says that when some soldiers attacked Jehoshaphat, mistaking him for King Ahab of Israel, he cried out, and they desisted, because they recognized him (1. K. XXII. 31, 32) : the Chronicler says they desisted because "the Lord God helped him, and moved

them to depart from him" (2. *Ch.* XVIII. 31). Solomon built a palace in Millo for one of his wives, a daughter of Pharaoh, and the fact is simply stated in *Kings* (1. *KXIX.* 24), but in *Chronicles* (2. *Ch.* VIII. 11) we are told that Solomon's motive for building this palace was that the presence of an idolatrous woman in the house of David, which had been hallowed by the presence of the Ark of God, would be sacrilegious! Compare the two following accounts of what happened at the dedication of Solomon's Temple :—

"When Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. And he stood and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice saying 'Blessed be the Lord,' "etc. 1 *K.* VIII. 54-56.

"When Solomon had made an end of praying, *the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burned offering and the sacrifice and the glory of the Lord filled the house.* And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house. *And when the children of Israel saw how the fire came down and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying 'For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever.'* 2 *Ch.* VII. 1-3.

It is impossible that such a lie as this could have been published in, or near the time of Solomon.

In *Kings* the priests are accused of embezzling money, collected to repair the temple (2 *K.* XII. 7. 4-16); but there is no hint to that effect in *Chronicles*. 2 *Ch.* XXIV. 4-14.

The most remarkable of all the discrepancies between *Kings* and *Chronicles*, and one evidently intended to exalt the glory of Judah and Jehovah, is found in the passages referring to the hostility of kings Abijah and Jeroboam. The former book says that Abijah was a wicked king, and had war with his rival (1. *K.* XV. 3, 7). The chronicler says that Abijah was pious; that he took the field with 400,000 men against Jeroboam, who was at the head of 800,000 men; and in a great battle the King of Israel was defeated, and 500,000 of his men slain. It seems that 1,200,000 soldiers sent into the field at one time by two

small tribes, and the destruction of 500,000 men in one battle, were beneath the notice of the author of *Kings*. Since the book of *Chronicles* is anonymous, it can scarcely be considered as the genuine production of any noted man ; and if the author were noted, his notoriety would not be a very enviable one.

§ 120. The book of *Ezra* gives the history of Judah from 536 to 515 B. C. Nehemiah commences his story at 444, and comes down to 404 B. C. The book of *Ezra* is evidently a compilation. The second chapter is occupied with a genealogy which Nehemiah (*VII.* 5) says he found; and that expression means of course that he did not know the author. That portion of *Ezra* between *IV.* 8 and *VI.* 18, is in the Jewish Bible written in Chaldaic and not in Hebrew. The book says that Ezra was "a ready Scribe" (*VII.* 6), and it is not to be supposed that an inspired prophet would write thus himself. In the book of *Nehemiah* (*XII.* 1-26) there is a list of priests, down to Jaddua, who who, according to Josephus, lived in the time of Alexander the Great.

§ 121. The author of the book of *Esther* is not mentioned by any authoritative tradition, and, therefore, I cannot argue against its genuineness as the alleged composition of any particular prophet ; but I shall attempt to show that it lacks genuineness as a historical work. It is a fiction throughout. It states (*I.* 4) that Ahasuerus, King of Persia, made a feast unto all his princes and officers, which lasted one hundred and eighty days.* How could the affairs of any government, especially an Oriental despotism,—where so much depends upon the magistrate,—be managed, when, for a whole half year, all these magistrates were assembled at Susa ? It is sometimes said that they went up by turns, each remaining but a short time, and then giving place to new guests. But of such an arrangement the text says nothing.

The king, heated with wine, sends for his queen, Vashti, to appear unveiled before his intoxicated guests. She, very wisely, declines such an invitation. Upon this he issues a decree, apparently dictated at the table, and sends it to all

* Most of this § is taken from Theodore Parker's addition to his translation of De Wette on the Old Testament.

the provinces of his kingdom, "that every man shall bear rule in his own house." A king, "merry with wine," might issue such a decree, and this explanation would perhaps suffice, were this the only passage presenting such a difficulty.

Haman, a prince at the court of Ahasuerus, is offended, because Mordecai, a Jew, refuses to do homage to him, and, therefore, scorning to avenge himself on the offender alone, he wishes to satisfy his vengeance, by destroying the whole nation of the Jews. Now, at this time all Judea was a Persian province ; besides Jews were scattered throughout all the other districts, and, therefore, it is a moderate estimate which computes their number at two millions, at that time within the Persian territories. Haman, to avenge himself in this private quarrel, obtains permission to destroy all this great number of people. The king consents that all of them should be massacred in a single day. The numerous massacres that defile the page of history naturally recur to the mind. But amongst them all—the Sicilian Vespers, the St. Bartholomew massacre, the horrors of Roman or Arabian butchery, or the atrocities of the French Revolution—there is nothing which approaches the murder of two million human beings in a single day. Nero, wishing all Rome had but one neck, must have shrunk from such a murder as this king is said to command for the sake of avenging a slight insult offered by one person to his Grand Vizier. The ten thousand talents, said to be offered as purchase money for such a body of subjects, only increase the difficulty, by showing the writer was at a loss what motive to ascribe to the king for so unnatural and impolitic an act, and could find none more probable than the love of gold.

The murderous decree is published in all the provinces, "to destroy, to kill and to cause to perish, all Jews both young and old, little children and women, in one day." This is not done hastily, for the time was fixed upon by casting lots a whole year before the deed was designed to be consummated (*III.* 7). No attempt was made to conceal the design from the intended victims. The Jews were aware of the plan, yet neither offered to flee nor to resist with arms. Yet the decree for their total destruction was publicly pro-

mulgated in all parts of the kingdom a whole year before the day appointed for the massacre. Is it to be credited that this number of men, enjoying the rights of other subjects of the Persian monarch, and possessed of the warlike spirit of the Jews, would wait tamely to be slaughtered "on a set day" like sheep? An edict so important and unusual must have become known to other historians, but none of them mentions it save Josephus, who evidently draws his information from this book itself.

The account of the Jews killing their enemies on the appointed day is, if possible, still more incredible. One night, as we are told, Ahasuerus, unable to sleep, commanded the chronicles of his kingdom to be read to him. He then learned that Mordecai had formerly done him a good service, previously mentioned in the book, but had received no recompense. Mordecai is rewarded in public. At a banquet, Esther, the queen, and a Jewess, laments to her royal spouse, that her people were all to be cut off. He seems to have been ignorant of her nationality and to have forgotten his decree for the extirpation of the Israelites (*VII. 5*). He finds, what he previously had known, that Haman is at the bottom of the affair, and seeing the gallows erected for Mordecai, says "Hang him [Haman] thereon." The current now sets in favor of the Jews, and on the twenty-third day of the third month, public letters are sent, sealed with the king's ring, "to the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and rulers of the provinces, who are from India to Ethiopia, unto every province, according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews, after their writing, and according to their language." These letters "granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey." They were sent and "published to all people," eight months and twenty days before the decree was to be executed. Wherever the letters came, the "Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day, and many of the people became Jews." It would be supposed the Persians and others likely to be injured by this decree, with

so long a time of preparation would prepare means of defense against the Jews, who were a small minority in the whole kingdom. But nothing of this kind takes place. They wait quietly during the eight months, as the Jews had done, during the previous three months. On the appointed day, the Jews assemble "to lay their hands on such as sought their hurt," and no man could withstand them. It seems that no attack was made on the Jews and no resistance offered to the massacre which they inflicted on the Persians. Even the magistrates, for fear of Mordecai, who had been elevated to Haman's position, helped the Jews. Upwards of seventy-five thousand Persians were slain in a single day. It is not mentioned that a single Jew fell in the slaughter. Permission is even granted them to continue the murder on the next day, and three hundred are slain at Susa. The Jews celebrated the next day as "a day of gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions to one another." Perhaps no amount of historical evidence would render such a narrative credible to an unprejudiced inquirer. How much less is it to be credited, when related by an apocryphal writer, who lived no one knows when, or where, and whose book is encumbered with so many other difficulties! Truly, Ahasuerus was a foolish, but scarcely a blood-thirsty king. The author of *Esther* would not only represent him as eminently stupid and barbarous, but would ascribe first to the Jews and next to the Persians, a tameness of spirit and incapacity of self-defense, "which are not paralled even among the most timid of animals—sheep and doves,—which at least will fly from danger." It is not necessary to mention other less important historical objections.

And this book was received by the ancient Jews as a true history, and for more than two thousand years they have celebrated the Feast of Purim, in the belief that it is a commemoration of that glorious day, when they were not only saved from the murderous decree of Ahasuerus, but were also permitted to massacre all their enemies among the Persians. This fact does not give us a very high opinion of the reliability of Jewish tradition as evidence of the genuineness and authenticity of their Sacred Scriptures.

§ 122. The book of *Job* is by an unknown author. It

has been ascribed to Moses, and to Solomon, and to several of the more noted Hebrew prophets, but without any evidence. It is generally agreed now among critics, that the book was written by a Jew, one of whose purposes in writing it, was to oppose the Jewish belief that every man's good or evil fortune in his earthly life, is the reward or punishment of his good or evil deeds. The description in the beginning of *Job*, of the levee day in Heaven, when God and Satan met on the most friendly terms, and agreed to join to tempt and afflict the good man, is very poetic, but not at all consistent with the Mosaic or Christian theology. J. A. Froude says that "The book of Job is evidently not orthodox Jewish in its character. The more it is studied, the more the conclusion forces itself upon us, that let the writer have lived when he would, in his struggle with the central falsehood of his people's creed, he must have divorced himself from them outwardly as well as inwardly : that he travelled away into the world, and lived long, perhaps all his natural life, in exile. Everything about the book speaks of a person who had broken free from the narrow littleness of the 'peculiar people.' The language, we said, is full of strange words. The hero of the poem is of a strange land, a gentile certainly, not a Jew. The life, the manners, the customs are of all varieties and places—Egypt with its rivers and pyramids is there ; the description of mining points to Phœnicia ; the settled life in cities, the nomad Arabs, the wandering caravans, the heat of the tropics, and the ice of the north, all are foreign to Canaan, speaking of foreign things and foreign people. No mention, or hint of mention, is there throughout the poem, of Jewish traditions or Jewish certainties. We look to find the three friends vindicate themselves, as they so well might have done, by appeals to the fertile annals of Israel—to the flood, to the cities of the plain, to the plagues of Egypt, or to the thunders of Sinai. But of all this there is not a word ; they are passed by as if they had no existence ; and instead of them, when witnesses are required for the power of God, we have strange un-Hebrew stories of the Eastern astronomic mythology, the old wars of the giants, the imprisoned Orion, the wounded dragon, 'the sweet influence of the seven stars', and the glittering fragments of the sea-

snake Rahab, trailing across the northern sky. Again : God is not the God of Israel, but the Father of mankind. We hear nothing of a chosen people, nothing of a special revelation, nothing of peculiar privileges ; and in the court of Heaven there is Satan, not the prince of this world and the enemy of God, but the angel of judgment, the accusing spirit, whose mission was to walk to and fro over the earth, and carry up to Heaven an account of the sins of mankind."

§ 123. Isaiah began his vocation as a prophet in 759 B. C., and continued to follow his trade during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, (*I. 1. VI, 1.*) The first part of the book known by his name may have been written by him, but the latter part (*XL.-LXVI.*) was certainly not. There is a strong difference of style between the two parts. That portion of the book, supposed to be spurious, has a more flowing, perspicuous and easy style, than the genuine chapters, but it is also weaker and more diffuse. In the spurious chapters Cyrus is mentioned by name, and the writer takes his stand-point in the time of the captivity. He often speaks of the condition of his people under the Babylonian yoke, not as a prophet foretelling a distant future event, but speaking of things happening in his own time. He commences chapter *XL* with foretelling not the captivity, but the deliverance. The Jewish people are "robbed and spoiled," "snared in holes" and "hid in prison-houses." "Who gave Jacob for a spoil?" "Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned?" "Therefore He [Jehovah] hath poured upon him [Jacob] his anger" (*Is. XLII. 22-25*). The oppression of the Assyrians, in the time of the genuine Isaiah is an old affair ; "Aforetime * * the Assyrians oppressed them without cause" (*LII. 4*). Cyrus is mentioned by name and styled the Lord's Messiah, who should rebuild the temple. If this be a prophecy, it is very different from all the other prophecies in the Bible. It is in these spurious chapters that the famous prophecies of Jesus are found ; but the prophet spoils his prediction by giving the name of Messiah to Cyrus, and by foretelling his career with much more distinctness than that of the Christian Savior. The Pseudo-Isaiah closes his prophecies by exhorting the Jews to maintain their nationality after the return from the

captivity, which did not happen until 200 years after the time of the genuine Isaiah.

§ 124. Jeremiah was a prophet from 629 to 588 B. C. (*I.* 2, 3. *XL-XLV*). His book is a confused compilation of prophecies and histories. The last verse of chapter *LI* says "Thus far the words of Jeremiah," and we must conclude that at least the remainder is spurious. Besides chapter *LII* is a mere repetition of the matter of chapters *XXXVII-XXXIX*: and in verse 31 events are related which occurred after Jeremiah's time. In chapter *LI* (15-19) there is a long quotation taken word for word from chapter *X* (12-16). "It is acknowledged," says Bishop Watson in his reply to Paine, "that the order of time [in the book known as *Jeremiah*] is not everywhere observed; the cause of the confusion is not known. Some attribute to Baruch collecting into one volume all the prophecies which Jeremiah had written, and neglecting to put them in their proper places. Others think that the several parts of the work were at first properly arranged, but that through accident or carelessness of transcribers they were deranged."

§ 125. Daniel, the alleged author of the biblical book of that name, was taken by order of Nebuchadnezzar, in the third year of king Jehoiakim (607, B. C.) to be educated at Babylon for a councillor (*Dan.* *I.* 1, 6): but Jeremiah (*XXV.* 1. *XLVI.* 2) says that Nebuchadnezzar did not come to the throne of Babylon till the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Portion of *Daniel* is written in Hebrew and portion in Chaldee, but the book is supposed to be the work of one author. Daniel is mentioned in terms of praise: he "had understanding in all visions and dreams": "among them all was found none like Daniel": "ten times better than all the scribes"; having "light, and understanding, and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods": "he was faithful and no error or fault was found in him." There are many reasons for attributing the book to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (175, B. C.). It contains a would-be prophetic description of events in the time of Antiochus; which is so very distinct and accurate that it must have been written after the event. Even the dates are given (*VIII.* 14. *IX.* 25. *XII.* 11, 12). The book has

a legendary character, being full of improbabilities. "Nebuchadnezzar * demands that the wise men should tell him the dream he had forgotten, and threatened to put them to death in case of their inability to obey his command (*II. 3*). He gives extravagant rewards to Daniel for restoring his lost dream, and explaining it (*II. 46*). He makes an image of gold sixty cubits high, and six cubits in diameter (*III. 1*), [of solid metal apparently !] and commands men to worship it (*III. 5*). He commands the mightiest men in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego [for refusing to worship], and cast them into a furnace, which was so hot as to destroy these mighty men as they cast in their victims (*III. 22*). He blessed the god of these three men, and makes a decree that 'every people, nation, and language', which speaks anything reproachful of this god, 'shall be cut to pieces, and its houses made a dunghill.'" The book was probably written to encourage the Jews to trust in Jehovah, and to hope for the discomfiture of Antiochus. This monarch is represented under the types of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. Antiochus took the sacred vessels of the Jewish worship, polluted the Temple, forbade the Levitical worship, and the observance of the Sabbath, and commanded the Jews to worship at the altar of Jupiter, erected on the high altar of Jehovah. All these facts seem to have been before the mind of the writer of *Daniel* when he composed such a story as should be best fitted to induce the Jews, in the time of Antiochus, to remain true to their faith. He represents those who refused to obey Nebuchadnezzar as being advanced to high honor, and Daniel, himself, when denouncing destruction to Belshazzar, was rewarded by that good-natured monarch. The reason why the book should be ascribed to Daniel, was that he was reputed to have been a great prophet. He is classed with Noah and Job, for righteousness, by Ezekiel (*XIV. 14, 18, 20*), and he had the reputation of having been one of the wisest men of his nation (*Ezek. XXVIII. 3*). It deserves to be noted, however, that if the Daniel mentioned by Ezekiel really was the author of this book, his great fame must have been acquired while he was still young.

* DE WETTE; translated by Theodore Parker.

§ 126. There is nothing in the book, known to us as the Gospel of *Matthew*, to indicate who was its author, nor can we derive any information on that point from any other portion of the New Testament, or from authentic history. The general tradition of the church as given by Irenæus, Origen, Epiphanius, Jerome, and Chrysostom (from 178–398 A.D.) relates that Matthew wrote a gospel in Hebrew, for the benefit of the Jewish Christians : and this tradition is the only reason for supposing that Matthew wrote at all, or that our present gospel was written by him.* The origin of this tradition appears to be solely the assertion of Papias (116 A. D.), whose works are lost, but whose statement of the tradition is preserved by Eusebius (315 A. D.). It is supposed that Papias received this tradition from John, an elder of the church at Ephesus. A Hebrew gospel, called sometimes *The Gospel of the Hebrews*, sometimes *The Gospel according to Matthew*, was in circulation among the Jewish Christians, or Ebionites, and was maintained by them to be the only true gospel. Of this Ebionite gospel, no copy has come down to our times, but we know from the writings of the fathers that it differed considerably from our book of *Matthew* ; among other differences, the Ebionite gospel had not the account of the divine parentage and miraculous conception of Jesus found in the present Christian gospel. There is reason to believe that there were other great differences, for the Ebionites were esteemed to be deeply heretical in a number of important points of their creed. Jerome obtained a copy of this gospel, and translated it into Greek and Latin at the end of the fourth century ; but he nowhere says it is the same as the gospel of *Matthew*, or bears any resemblance to it. Now, we must suppose that the churches, for which Matthew wrote, and in whose language he wrote, would be much more likely to preserve his writings in purity than distant churches of different blood, different languages, and of a creed, which, as we have abundant reason to believe, was not sanctioned by Matthew, or any of the immediate disciples of Jesus. If we conclude that the Ebionite gospel was written by Matthew, and that it was more likely to be preserved pure in the Hebrew at Jerusalem, than at Corinth in Greek, then we must suppose

* The greater portion of this paragraph is copied from GREG.

that our present Greek *Matthew* is either a different book entirely, or much corrupted. We have no assurance of any kind that the Hebrew *Matthew* was ever translated into Greek, and used in that form as a sacred book ; nor have we any assurance that our *Matthew* ever existed in a Hebrew form ; and if we assume that it was translated, we have no assurance that the translation was faithful to the original. The Hebrew *Matthew* does not now exist, and the original of our *Matthew* is found only in the Greek.

Under this statement of the case, which is entirely correct and fair to the gospel of *Matthew*, there must remain strong doubts of its genuineness. These doubts are confirmed by a consideration of its contents. It lacks the clearness of historical narrative, which an eye-witness, such as the apostle Matthew was, of the adventures of Jesus, would have given. He does not specify places, or dates, or mention the details which are necessary to furnish the idea of a connection of events. There are no incidents of travel. Jesus appears in different places, but we are not informed, how he got from one to the other. We are not told whether he walked, or rode, where he lodged, what he ate, or how he paid his expenses. All that is mentioned of the different places, which he visited, is merely enough to assert that he was there, and then some conversation is related, his words being given at considerable length. I have made the subjoined abstract of all his movements, as recorded by *Matthew* subsequent to the Sermon on the Mount, with which his public ministry began :

He came down from the Mount (*VIII.* 1) ; he entered into Capernaum (5) ; he went into Peter's house (14) ; he crossed the sea of Galilee in a ship (18. 23. 28) ; he went into his own city, going by ship (*IX.* 1) ; " he arose and departed to his house " (7) ; he went forth from thence (9) ; he " sat at meal in the house " (10) ; he went to a " ruler's house " (23) ; he " departed thence " (27) ; " and Jesus went about the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues " (35) ; " he departed thence to teach and preach in their cities " (*XI.* 1.) ; " at that time Jesus went on the sabbath-day through the corn " (*XII.* 1) : " he withdrew himself from thence " (15) : he was in a house (46) ; " the same day went Jesus out of the house and sat by the sea-side " (*XIII.* 1) ; " he went into a ship and sat " (2) ; " he departed thence " (53) : he entered " his own country " (54) : he departed " by ship into a desert place "

(XIV. 13); "he went up into a mountain to pray" (23); he went across the sea "into the land of Gennesaret" (34); "then Jesus went thence and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon" (XV. 21); "and Jesus departed from thence and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee" (29); then "Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi," (XVI. 13); "and after six days" he went upon a mountain and was transfigured (XVII. 1.); and then he came to Capernaum (XVII. 24); he departed from Galilee and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan" (XIX. 1.); "he departed thence" (15); "he went up to Jerusalem" (XX. 17), going through Jericho (29); "He entered Jerusalem by way of Bethphage" (XXI. 1. 10); he went into the Temple (12); he went "into Bethany and he lodged there" (17); "in the morning he returned to the city" (18); he went to the Temple (23); "he sat upon the Mount of Olives" (XXIV. 3); "he was in Bethany" (XXVI. 6); he went "into the mount of Olives" (30); and there he was arrested (57).

Such is a complete summary of the history and chronology of Christ's personal movements, as recorded by Matthew. He mentions only one visit to Jerusalem, while John mentions three. (*John II. 13. VII. 10. X. 40. XI. 17, 18*). The few incidents mentioned by the first Evangelist are used for hanging discourses upon—a mere skeleton used to furnish a slight connection between the various sayings of Jesus. The sayings themselves are frequently mere fragments. Take the following instance :—

"And a certain scribe came and said unto him 'Master I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.' And Jesus saith unto him 'The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.'" *Mat. VIII. 19. 20.*

Such is the entire history of that conversation, its beginning, end and result. An eye-witness would have added something to make the words of Jesus apply more directly to the case of the Scribe, or would at least have said whether the Scribe did follow Jesus or not. Another reason for believing that the author of *Matthew* was a compiler of traditions, not an eye-witness, is that he repeats four legends, telling the same stories over twice with slight variations: whereas they are mentioned only once by the other Evangelists. Such are the legends of the feeding of the multitude, the cure of the blind man, the demand of a sign, and the accusation of the use of demoniac power in casting out devils. The want of clear conception of the movements of

Jesus is evident in every portion of the book ; more particularly to any one who will compare the narrative in chapter *VIII* of the *Acts* with chapter *VIII* of *Matthew*, or compare narrative portions generally of the two books. We are told that “ the gift* of narrating luminously is a personal qualification of which even an Apostle might be destitute, and which is rarely found among the lower orders of the people.” This excuse does not appear to me sufficient to save the genuineness of the book ; but if it does, it places divine inspiration in a bad light. It is rather singular that Jehovah should choose such a bungler for an apostle, and afterwards choose him for an evangelist too, knowing him to be wanting in the first qualifications of a historian.

Thus much upon the question whether the apostle Matthew wrote the book ascribed to him : and now a few words upon the date of its composition. Christian authors argue that it was written six or eight years after the crucifixion, but the only testimony which they can produce to sustain that opinion is found in their assumption that the church would not be left a longer time without a written evangel. On the other hand, there is much reason for believing that it was not written for more than thirty years after the death of Jesus. The writer represents his hero as saying, “ From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by storm” (*Mat. XI. 12*). This is an expression which could not have been used until long after the time of the Baptist, certainly not during his life ; and yet, we are told that this language was used before John was slain by Herod (*Mat. XIV. 10*). It is plain in this case that the Evangelist ascribed language to Jesus which he did not use, and that the writer was not an eye-witness. Again, Christ is represented to have spoken as follows :—“ Upon you [the Pharisees] may come all the righteous blood shed upon earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the altar” (*Mat. XXIII. 35*). But this Zacharias was slain in 68 A. D., and, therefore, the book must have been written after that time. Josephus (*War, IV. 4*) relates that Zacharias, son of Baruch, an eminent, and very

* KIRTO. Cyc. Bib. Lit. Article *Matthew*.

worthy citizen of Jerusalem, was murdered in the Temple, 68 A. D. There is only one other Zacharias mentioned in Jewish history as having been murdered, and he was the son of Jehoiada, and was slain 840 B. C. (2. *Ch.* XXIV.). But Jesus could never have intended to say that no eminent person of great virtue had been slain within 800 years, as he must have been understood, if he had included all the murderous shedding of righteous blood between Abel and Zacharias, the son of Jehoiada. If the Pharisees had been stained with no blood for eight centuries, the Evangelist could scarcely have spoken so indignantly of the conduct of those living in his own time. The Evangelist must have meant the man slain 68 A. D., and he meant probably to convey the idea that Jesus spoke this in the prophetic spirit, which he is represented as showing in a number of other passages.

Matthew represents Jesus as making a number of predictions of the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple. If we had any satisfactory evidence that these would-be prophecies had been delivered, and recorded before the event, we should wonder at their fulfilment; but without that evidence, we must, in reason, suppose that they were composed after the event, and referred to an earlier time. Thus, Jesus says that one stone of the Temple should not be left upon another (*Mat.* XXIV. 1); that the people should "see the abomination of desolation" (15); that great woe should come upon Jerusalem (16-22); that many false Christs should arise (24); that there should be wars, famines, pestilences; that the Gospel should be preached to all nations (14); and that the believers should be persecuted (9). All these predictions may be said to have been fulfilled between the years 60 and 67 A. D. The Gospel had been preached in many parts of the Roman Empire as early as 65 A. D.; the first persecution was that of Nero in 64; the "abomination of desolation" is understood to have been the attack on the Temple in 66 A. D., by Cestius; there were a great number of pretenders among the Jews about that time, claiming to be the possessors of divine commissions, and Josephus says that they did much harm by stirring the people to rebellion (*War*, VII. 5); the year 66 A. D., according to Tacitus, "so disgraced by crimes,

was also marked by the gods with tempests and pestilences ;” Jerusalem was not besieged and destroyed till 70 A. D., but a siege was expected for several years before it occurred ; and reasonable men might well anticipate that when the Roman power was turned against the city, she could not long resist. That the book was written before the destruction of the Holy City, or at least not long after that event, is clear from the fact that the Evangelist expected the second coming of Christ to follow close upon “ the tribulation of those days.” *Mat. XXIV. 29.*

Such are the internal evidences of the date of the first Evangel. The only external testimony is that of unreliable traditions, which, however, ascribe the book to a late date. Irenæus (175 A. D.) and Theodore of Mopsuestia (394 A. D.) say that Matthew wrote while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome, which, according to tradition, was about 64 A. D. ; and Origen (230 A. D.) says that Matthew wrote before Mark, Luke and John.

§ 127. We have no information as to the authorship of the second Evangel, save from tradition, which ascribes it to Mark, who is mentioned a number of times in the New Testament (*Col. VI. 10 ; Acts XII. 12, 25 ; XIII. 5, 15 ; XV. 37 ; Philem, 24*). The same tradition says that he was a companion of Peter, and wrote at his dictation, or according to information derived from him. It is not claimed that he was an eye-witness of any of the events in the life of Jesus. Our original copy of *Mark* is in Greek ; but according to tradition, as given by Clement (94 A. D., Eusebius (300 A. D.), Epiphanius (368 A. D.), and Jerome (392 A. D.), it was written in Rome, for the benefit of the Christians residing there ; and a reference to the Roman law of divorce (*Mark, X. 12*), seems to indicate its composition in that place. Nevertheless, the style bears a remarkable resemblance in many points to the Greek of our *Matthew*. Mark evidently used the first Evangel very freely in compiling his book. There is such a similarity between the ideas and the general order of events, and in many places such an exact correspondence between the modes of expression, as could have arisen only in the copying of one from the other, or of both from a more ancient document. Compare the following parallel passages :—

" And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea : for they were fishermen. And he saith unto them ' Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.' And they straightway left their nets and followed him. And going out from thence, he saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in a ship with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets : and he called them, and they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him." *Mat. IV. 18.*

" And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom ; and he saith unto him, ' Follow me.' And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold many publicans and sinners came, and sat down with him and his disciples." *Mat. IX. 9.*

" And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitude away. And when he had sent the multitude away, he went into a mountain privately to pray." *Mat. XIV. 22.*

A similar correspondence prevails throughout the book, even in the use of awkward Jewish-Greek phrases.

According to tradition, the gospel of *Mark* was written between 64 and 70 A. D.

§ 128. The third Evangel is ascribed by tradition to Luke (mentioned in *Col. IV. 14 : 2 Tim. IV. 11 : Philem. 24*) a physician of Antioch, and the reputed author of the

" Now, as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea : for they were fishermen. And Jesus said unto them ' Follow me and I will make you to become fishers of men.' And straightway they forsook their nets and followed him : and when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, who also were in the ship, mending their nets. And straightway he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him." *Mark I. 16.*

" As he passed by, he saw Levi, the son of Alpheus sitting at the Custom House, and said unto him ' Follow me.' And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples : for there were many, and they followed him." *Mark II. 14.*

" And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go before to the other side, over against Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray." *Mark VI. 45.*

Acts. That he copied from Matthew, or from the same source with him, is certain : but critics are not agreed whether Luke copied from Mark, or Mark from Luke. Compare the following passages :—

“The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them : and saith unto him ‘All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.’ Then saith Jesus unto him ‘Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.’” *Mat. IV. 8–10.*

“Behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying ‘Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.’ And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him ‘See thou tell no man : but go thy way ; shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them.” *Mat. VIII. 2–4.*

“And it came to pass that he went through the cornfields on the Sabbath-day : and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him ‘Behold why do they on the Sabbath-day that which is not lawful ?’ And he said unto them ‘Have ye never read what David did,

“The devil, taking him up with an high mountain, shewed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him ‘All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them ; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.’ And Jesus answered and said unto him ‘Get thee behind me Satan, for it is written ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.’” *Luke IV. 5–8.*

“Behold, a man full of leprosy, who, seeing Jesus, fell on his face, and besought him, saying Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.’ And he put forth his hand and touched him saying ‘I will : be thou clean.’ And immediately the leprosy departed from him. And he charged him to tell no man ; ‘but go and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded for a testimony unto them.” *Luke V. 12–14.*

“And it came to pass on the second Sabbath after the first, that he went through the cornfields ; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them ‘Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath-days ?’ And Jesus, answering

when he had need, and was an-hungered, he and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar, the high priest, and did eat the shew bread, which is not lawful to eat, but for the priests, and he gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.' *Mat. II. 23-28.*

them, said 'Have ye not read so much as this, what David, when himself was an-hungered, and they which were with him? How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shew-bread, and gave also to them that were with him, which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone? And he said unto them that the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.'" *Luke IV. 1-5.*

Luke was not a disciple of Jesus, but was a friend of Paul, and according to the tradition mentioned by Irenæus and Origen, wrote the Gospel as preached by the thirteenth apostle, who also expressed his approbation of the book. Tradition also states that the book was written in Greece, after the composition of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

The similarity between the first three Gospels is such, that neither accident nor inspiration is considered sufficient to account for it. Michaelis gives it, as his opinion, that "It is wholly impossible that three historians, who have no connection, either mediate or immediate, with each other, should harmonize as Matthew, Mark and Luke do." Eichhorn supposed that the three copied from an older document, each making such abbreviations, omissions, and alterations as suited him. Previous to the time of Eichhorn, critics generally were disposed to believe that Mark and Luke copied from Matthew. De Wette* thinks that the three reduced to writing the sayings of Jesus as they were preserved in oral tradition. Whatever the truth may be, we may safely assert that all three were written by persons who were not eye-witnesses of the events related, nor inspired with superhuman ability as historians, nor possessed of superhuman knowledge of the life of Jesus.

§ 129. The fourth book of the New Testament claims (*XXI. 24. XIX. 26*) the disciple whom Jesus loved for its author: and tradition, of which the earliest record is

* *Einleitung in das Neue Testament.* § 87.

found in Irenæus, A. D. 178, says it was written at Ephesus by the Apostle John, after Matthew, Mark, and Luke had written. Fabricius, Le Clerc, and Hennell think it was written about 97 A. D. According to Hennell, "The first three Gospels agree very well in the style of the discourses attributed to Christ, which were chiefly parables and short pithy sayings. They represent him as beginning his public preaching in Galilee, proceeding after some time to Jerusalem, and suffering there. The chief topic dwelt upon is the approach of the Kingdom of Heaven : and they contain much concerning the fall of Jerusalem. But the Gospel of John is of a very different character. The discourses of Christ are here long controversial orations, without any parables. He is made to journey from Galilee to Jerusalem and back again many times : The kingdom of Heaven is nearly lost sight of, the fall of Jerusalem never alluded to, and we have instead of these several new subjects, viz : —the incarnation of the word or *logos* in the person of Christ ; his coming down from Heaven, his relationship to the Father, and the promise of the comforter or Holy Spirit. Also, with a few exceptions, a new set of miracles is attributed to Christ. * * This Gospel appears to be the attempt of a half-educated but zealous follower of Jesus, to engraft his conceptions of the Platonic philosophy upon the original faith of the disciples. The divine wisdom, or *logos*, or light, proceeding from God of which so much had been said in the Alexandrian school, he tells us became a man, or flesh, in the person of Jesus, dwelt for a time on earth, and ascended up where he was before, and where he had been from the beginning, into the bosom of the Father. The title 'Son of God' applied by the Jews to the expected Messiah, but by the Platonists to the world itself, and afterwards to the *logos*, affords him another point of amalgamation ; and a term which had been understood by the Jews probably merely in the sense of election or adoption, as in the case of David, is by him put forth as indicating a more sublime and mysterious union. Consequently, this Gospel shows throughout a double or Christian-Platonic object ; first, to prove that Jesus is the Christ, which was common to all the apostles, and secondly, that the Christ is the Son of God, or *logos* which de-

scended from heaven to give light to men." "In the fifth chapter* of *John* (19-47), a very long discourse of Jesus is connected with a cure wrought by him on the Sabbath. The mode in which Jesus defends the exercise of his healing power on that day, is worthy of notice, as distinguished from that adopted by him in the earlier Gospels. These ascribe to him, in such cases, three arguments—the example of David, who ate the shew-bread, the precedent of the Sabbatical labor of the priests in the Temple, and the course pursued with respect to an ox that falls into a pit or is led out to water. All these arguments are entirely in the practical spirit that characterizes the teaching ascribed to Jesus. But the fourth Evangelist makes him argue from the uninterrupted activity of God, and by the expression 'My Father worketh hitherto,' reminds us of the principle in the Alexandrian metaphysics that 'God never ceases to act;' a doctrine more likely to be familiar to John than to Jesus."

There is a great similarity between the style of the Evangel of *John* and that of the first epistle of *John*, which is also attributed to John the Apostle. Much of John's Evangel is marked by the same fragmentary character which is found in the first three Evangelists, and the want of those details which an eye-witness must have given. He relates chiefly the adventures of Jesus in Judea, while the three confine their attention to what passed in Galilee. Altogether, they are four singular tales to be received in civilized countries as having been written under the influence of Divine wisdom and truth.

There is nothing in the epistles of Paul, some of which were written a quarter of a century after the crucifixion, to show that he knew anything of any Gospels, or expected any to be written. He never mentioned any sacred record of the life of Jesus, or quoted any of his sayings. He ordered the churches which he had established to read his Epistles, and in mentioning them alone, gave his converts to understand that there was no other Christian Gospel in existence. Lardner admits "that in the apostolical epistles of the New Testament" there are "no references to written Gospels or histories of Jesus of Christ." There is

* STRAUSS. Life of Jesus.

not any one writer in the New Testament who distinctly recognizes any other as inspired to write the Word of God. The tradition of the church says that St. John approved of the three first Gospels, but he says nothing of them in his Evangel.

CHAPTER XXII.

BOOKS NOT PRESERVED AS WRITTEN.

“Instead of the four Gospels adopted by the church, the heretics produced a multitude of histories in which the actions and discourses of Christ and of his apostles were adapted to their respective tenets.”—GIBBON.

“The greatest and most learned doctors of the fourth century were, without exception, disposed to deceive and lie, whenever the interests of religion required it.”—MOSHÉM.

§ 130. If the Bible be a revelation from Heaven of truths of the utmost importance to humanity—of truths otherwise unattainable by man—of truths whose reception in purity is the only means of salvation for each individual human being from everlasting torments ; and if ages, remote from the time when these truths were committed to writing, were to have the benefit of that revelation, it should be preserved as written. The same miraculous influence might be expected to be exercised to preserve the book, which was exerted in its composition ; and, without such influence, we could scarcely expect that the Bible has been preserved in purity. If we consider the condition of society, when the books of the Bible were first published, and for many centuries afterwards, the want of printing type, the great labor—even extending throughout a whole year—of making a copy of the Scriptures, the paucity of all kinds of books, the liability of manuscripts to be destroyed, the ignorance of

copyists, the strong probability that they would make some errors in copying a long work, the inability of readers to discover errors, and their inability to correct the errors, if discovered,—if we consider all these things, we cannot believe that the Bible has come down to us, word for word, as written, unless it has been protected by some supernatural influence. All the other large books which have been transmitted to us from remote antiquity have been more or less corrupted, either by the ignorance and carelessness of transcribers, or by their intentional alterations. The more important corruptions of the original texts of manuscripts generally originated in intentional alterations. “Such* an arbitrary mode of proceeding with the composition of another, so that it shall pass, thus altered, into circulation, is in our times a thing unheard of and impossible ; because it is prevented by the multiplication of printed copies. But it was different before the invention of printing. In transcribing a manuscript the most arbitrary alterations were considered allowable, since they affected only an article of private property, written for one’s individual use. But these altered manuscripts being again transcribed, without inquiry whether the manuscript transcribed contained the pure text of the author, altered copies of works thus passed unobserved into circulation. How many manuscripts of the Chronicles of the middle ages, of which several manuscripts are extant, agree with each other in exhibiting the same text, equally copious or equally brief? What numerous complaints do we read in the fathers of the first centuries concerning the arbitrary alterations made in their writings, published but a short time before, by the possessors or transcribers of manuscripts. Scarcely had copies of the letters of Dionysius, of Corinth, begun to circulate, before, as he expressed himself, ‘the apostles of Satan filled them with tares,’ omitting some things and adding others ; and the same fate, according to his testimony, the Holy Scriptures themselves could not escape. If transcribers had not permitted themselves to make the most arbitrary alterations in the writings of others, would it have been as customary as we find it was, for the authors of those times to adjure their readers, at the end of their writings, to make no alter-

* EICHHORN. Translated in Norton, on the Gospels.

ations in them, and to denounce the most fearful curses against those who should undertake to do so? The histories of Jesus [and the books of the Old Testament] must also have been subjected to the same mode of treatment," if abandoned to take their chances with mere ordinary human books. And if it appear that the Bible alone has not been in any way corrupted, but still exists in perfect purity as when first composed, we may justly infer that it has been preserved by the care of a Divine Providence, and from the preservation we may argue to its original publication by a Divine Author.

§ 131. There is a strong presumption that the early manuscripts of the Gospels were altered from base motives, to support the doctrines or advance the interests of the forger. The establishment of the early Christian churches was immediately followed by the rise of numerous sects among them, who engaged in the bitterest disputes with each other. They differed as to whether circumcision, sacrifice, the passover, pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and the Sabbath should be observed; whether any but Jews were entitled to salvation; whether matter was eternal; whether Christ was a man or a god, or a union of both; whether Mary was a virgin after giving birth to Jesus; whether God was three or one; whether salvation was obtained by faith, or works, or grace; whether Satan would live forever; whether the world would be burned up in that generation; and a great many similar questions, equally foolish, and equally beyond the possibility of proof; but all raised to a great importance by the popular belief that the rejection of the truth, even in small points of religion, would be punished by everlasting torments in hell. The members of the various sects were ready to resort to any forgery which might serve to give strength to their doctrines. Neander says that "The writings of the so-called apostolic fathers are, alas! come down to us for the most part in a very uncertain condition; partly because, in early times, writings were counterfeited under the names of these venerable men of the church, in order to propagate certain opinions or principles; partly because those writings, which they had really published, were adulterated"; and among these apostolical fathers whose writings have been counterfeited and

corrupted, he specially mentions Barnabas and Clement—the former, the companion of Paul, the latter, Bishop of Rome at the end of the first century. Of the latter he says “Under his name we have one epistle to the church of Corinth, and the fragment of another. The first is genuine but is not free from important interpolations. * * * Under the name of this Clement two letters have been preserved in the Syrian churches. * * * These epistles altogether bear the character of having been counterfeited in the latter years of the second or third century.”

We soon find in examining the critical works on the Bible that it has not been preserved as written. In the ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, one hundred and fifty thousand different readings have been discovered : and there is no standard by which to know the correct one. Most of these variations are mere trifles of the accidental omission or repetition of a letter or word ; but no one knows how important some of the other variations may be : no one knows how great the variations are from the original works, all of which are now lost. None of our manuscripts are older than the sixth century. Palfrey says that “An exact undeviating written copy of a composition of considerable length, if we may not call it an impossible achievement, is probably a work of which no example exists.” Origen complained that in his time there was much difference between different copies of *Matthew* ; and some of the variations he charged to “revisers who strike out or add according to their own judgment.” Michaelis says that various readings “which as appears from the quotations of the Fathers, were in the text of the New Testament, are to be found in none of the manuscripts at present existing. Paley declares that the subscriptions of six of Paul’s Epistles are spurious ; Horne admits that there are “posterior interpolations” in the Bible ; most of the Christian commentators on the Bible assert that in a number of passages, the text of the Bible has been corrupted. It is universally admitted among Biblical critics, that verse 7 in 1 *John V* is a forgery, committed to support the doctrine of the Trinitarians : and the word “God” in 1. *Tim. III.* 16 is a fraudulent insertion in place of “which.” The last twelve verses of *Mark* as they stand in our English Bibles were

not found in most of the copies of *Mark*, three hundred years after Jesus, and we have no evidence that they existed in any previous to 200 A. D. The first and second chapters of *Matthew* were wanting in most of the earliest copies of that book, of which we have any notice, and the third chapter has the appearance of having been intended as the beginning of a book. The ancient Jews had a tradition, that the Mosaic law had been burned at the time of the captivity, and that it had been republished by Ezra : and this tradition was received as trustworthy by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Chrysostom, Theodoret and probably by others of the Fathers who have not spoken on the subject. As Dr. Adam Clarke says "All antiquity is nearly unanimous in giving Ezra the honor of collecting the different writings of Moses and the prophets, and reducing them into the form in which they are now found in the Holy Bible." In the Hebrew *Apocrypha*, Esdras says,

"Thy law is burned ; therefore no man knoweth the things which thou hast done, or the works that are to begin. But if I have found grace before thee, send down the Holy Spirit into me and I shall write all that hath been done in the world, since the beginning, which were written in thy law, that men may find thy path, and that they which will live in the latter day, may live." 2 *Esdras* XIV. 21.

"And it came to pass that when the forty days were fulfilled, that the highest spake, saying, 'the first, that thou hast written, publish openly that the foolish and unworthy may read it : but keep the seventy last, that thou mayest deliver them only to such as be wise among the people.' " 2 *Es.* XIV. 45.

Many of the Jews, in ancient times, believed that Esdras had re-written the laws as here stated.

§132. Besides, we find that many books referred to in the Bible, are lost—and apparently they were books divinely inspired : for we cannot presume that an inspired prophet would appeal, for support, or refer, for more complete and correct information, to mere human compositions. The following is a list of the Lost Books of Jehovah's Gospel :

1. "It is said in the book of *The Wars of the Lord* what he [Jehovah] did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon." *Num.* XXI. 14.

2. "The sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people

had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of *Jasher* ?" *Josh. X. 13.*

"He [David] bade them teach the children the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of *Jasher*." 2 *S. I. 18.*

3. "Samuel told the people the manner [*Constitution*] of the *Kingdom* and wrote it in a book." 1 *S. X. 25.*

4. "He [Solomon] spoke *Three Thousand Proverbs*." 1 *K. IV. 32.*

5. "His [Solomon's] *Songs* were a thousand and five." 1 *K. IV. 32.*

6. "He [Solomon in his *Natural History*] spake of trees from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts and of fowl, and of creeping things and of fishes." 1 *K. IV. 33.*

7. "The rest of the acts of Solomon and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the *Acts of Solomon* ?" 1 *K. XI. 41.*

8. "The rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the book of *The Chronicles of the Kings of Israel*." 1 *K. XIV. 19* ; *XVI. 5. 20. 27* ; *XXII. 39.*

9. "The rest of the acts of Abijam and all that he did, are they not written in the book of *The Chronicles of the Kings of Judah* ?" 1 *K. XV. 7.*

10. "Neither was the number [of the inhabitants of Judea] put in the account of *The Chronicles of King David*." 1 *Ch. XXVII. 24.*

11. "The acts of David, the king, first and last, behold, they are written * * in *The Book of Nathan*, the prophet." 1 *Ch. XXIX. 29* ; 2. *Ch. IX. 29.*

12. "The acts of David, the king, first and last, behold, they are written * * in *The Book of Gad*, the seer." 1 *Ch. XXIX. 29* ; 2 *Ch. IX. 29.*

13. "The rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written * * in *The Prophecy of Ahijah*, the Shilonite ?" 2 *Ch. IX. 29.*

14. "The rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written * * in the *Visions of Iddo*, the seer ?" 2 *Ch. IX. 29.*

15. "The acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in *The Book of Shemaiah*, the prophet ?" 2 *Ch. XII. 15.*

16. "His [Manasseh's] prayer also, and how God was entreated of him, and all his sin and his trespass * * * behold, they are written among *The Sayings of Hosea*." 2 *Ch. XXXIII. 19.*

17. "Jeremiah lamented for Josiah ; and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel ; and behold, they are written in the *Lamentations*." 2 *Ch. XXXV. 25.*

18. "I [Paul] wrote unto you in an Epistle." 1 *Cor. V. 9.*

19. "When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." *Col. IV. 16.*

20. "Enoch also the seventh from Adam prophecied of these, saying 'Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints.'" *Jude. 14.*

The book known to us as the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah, does not contain a lament for Josiah, and therefore it is not the book mentioned as No. 17 of the lost books in the above list. From these passages it appears that there are no less than twenty books lost—twenty books written by the inspiration of Jehovah. It's a great waste of inspiration. The book of *Enoch* has been recovered, a copy of it having been found among the Abyssinian Christians within the last hundred years; but it has not been inserted in the Bibles: the time has past for patching up canons of Sacred Scripture among enlightened people.

§ 133. Besides all this, the books, now included in the Bible, were only a few of those published and at one time received as inspired; and the selection of our inspired Gospel for us, and the rejection of the uninspired, all having been previously of equal authority, was made by rules, and for reasons, unknown to us, in a dark age, by men whom we know to have been filled with debasing superstition, and to have been parties to numerous and gross frauds. The selection of the books which now form the New Testament, was made about 300 A. D., in the very atmosphere of priestly fraud, and by men, all of whom, as Mosheim says, "were disposed to deceive and lie, whenever the interests of religion required it"—by men who asserted that they and their brother priests frequently raised the dead, cured the blind and the lame, and cast out devils with miraculous power—by men who introduced image-worship, the invocation of saints, the worship of relics, prayers for the dead, the sign of the cross, the sacraments, the use of consecrated oil, and many other superstitious observances. And all Christendom blindly believes, and we are expected to believe as blindly, that all the books, selected by these men, are inspired, and that all rejected by them, were not inspired! That there were in early times a great many books, not now included in the New

Testament, which were received as of divine authority in various Christian churches ; and that there were also many other books purporting to be inspired records of Christian doctrine, or of the lives of sacred, characters not received by the churches, is not denied by any Christian author, certainly by none of any learning. Jonathan Edwards speaks of five would-be inspired books mentioned by authors of the second century, four by the authors of the third century, and seventeen by authors of the fourth century, all of which books are now lost, so that we cannot judge of their merits. Besides these, there are many books still in existence, which purport, though they are not recognized by the Christians, to be inspired, and to have been written in the early ages of the Church. All these we must believe to be spurious and false, and all those in the New Testament to be genuine and authentic, under penalty of eternal hell—and all on the faith of the doctors of the fourth century.

“The opinions, or rather the conjectures, of the learned”, says Mosheim, “concerning the time when the books of the New Testament were collected into one volume, as also about the authors of that collection, are extremely different. This important question is attended with great and almost insuperable difficulties to us in these latter times. It is, however, sufficient for us to know that, before the middle of the second century, the greatest part of the books of the New Testament were read in every Christian society throughout the world, and received as a divine rule of faith and manners. Hence it appears that these sacred writings were carefully separated from several human compositions upon the same subject, either by some of the Apostles themselves, who lived so long, or by their disciples and successors, who were spread abroad through all nations. We are well assured that the four Gospels were collected during the life of St. John [?], and that the three first received the approbation of this divine apostle [?]. And why may we not suppose that the other books of the New Testament were gathered together at the same time? What renders this highly probable [?], is that *the most urgent necessity required its being done*. For not long after Christ’s ascension into heaven, several histories of his life

and doctrines, full of pious frauds and fabulous wonders, were composed by persons, whose intentions, perhaps, were not bad, but whose writings discovered the greatest superstition and ignorance. Nor was this all : productions appeared, which were imposed on the world by fraudulent men as the writings of the holy Apostles. These apocryphal and spurious writings must have produced a sad confusion, and rendered both the history and doctrine of Christ uncertain, had not the rulers of the Church used all possible care in separating the books that were truly apostolical and divine from all that spurious trash, and conveying them down to posterity in one volume." —

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHRISTIAN MYSTERIES.

What, the light of your mind, which is the direct inspiration of the Almighty, pronounces incredible—that in God's name leave uncredited ; at your peril do not try believing that."
CARLYLE.

§ 134. The Bible teaches certain doctrines called " mysteries." A Christian mystery is a dogma, which, no matter how much it may be studied, or how great the genius which studies it, must always remain mysterious, dark to the understanding, unreasonable, anti-reasonable, and absurd. Christians must believe all the mysteries of their creed and church with the blindest faith ; and the merit of their belief is great in proportion to the greatness or absurdity of the mystery. There is no merit in believing propositions proved to be true by abundant evidence ; that is something which every worldling may do : but faith—belief without evidence, and contrary to reason—that is the virtue which opens the gates of heaven. Among these mysteries of the

Bible are the myth of Adam's Fall, the incarnation of God in a human form, the virginity of Mary after having conceived and given birth to a child, the atonement, and the tri-une nature of the Godhead. These mysteries should not be confounded, as to their nature, with the incomprehensible infinitudes or the unexplained problems of nature. Thus, we all believe in infinite time and space, but these are the necessary counterparts of finite space and time, and we cannot refuse to believe their existence though we do not comprehend them. The mysteries of Christianity do not belong to the same class. They are not the unavoidable correlates of propositions which all sane men receive. We can reject them without falling into any greater absurdity—without doing any violence to the teaching of our reason or senses. If we receive them, we do so against the authority of the understanding, and deprive ourselves of the only protection against all the absurd and superstitious doctrines which have ever been received among men. If we believe a Christian mystery, why should we not also believe the mysteries offered to us by the Brahmins? When we believe the man who teaches that God is one person, composed of three persons, why shall we not believe another who teaches that each one of the three is again composed of three, and so going on in infinite subdivisions? How are we to distinguish doctrines which appear contrary to reason from those which are false? When I reject a mystery the Christians "call it the dislike of corrupt human nature to the truth; but I shall call it the repulsion of my reason and my natural feelings to their doctrines."*

§ 135. Adam's Fall is the first mystery. Jehovah made Adam perfectly happy and sinless—ignorant even of good and evil—and placed him in paradise, and told him there was but one thing forbidden: which was to eat the fruit of a certain apple-tree. This fruit, very different from any we have now-a-days, gave great knowledge to whoever ate of it—the knowledge of good and evil. There was another tree, the apples of which gave immortality, but of this Adam was not permitted to taste. Why did Jehovah place forbidden fruit within Adam's reach? Why did he draw Adam's attention to it by a special prohibition? Why did

* NORTON.

he not place Adam at once in the position where he should remain, without any nonsensical dilly-dallying? His conduct towards Adam cannot be better illustrated than by comparing it to that of "A mother, who knowing certainly that her daughter would lose her virginity at a certain place and time, if solicited by a certain person, should manage the interview, and leave her daughter there unguarded."* The mysterious nature of Adam's Fall is much increased when we remember that not knowing good from evil, he could not have been morally responsible: for such knowledge is indispensable to responsibility. It was not until after he had eaten the apple, not until he had done the deed, that he was able to comprehend the difference between "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not." How could he deserve punishment under those circumstances? The whole theory of the punishment and of the sin of Adam assumes that he was no more ignorant or free from sin than we are. "Suppose," says F. W. Newman, "a youth to have been carefully brought up at home, and every temptation kept out of his way; suppose him to have been in appearance virtuous, amiable, religious; suppose farther, that at the age of twenty-one he goes out into the world, and falls into sin by the first temptation;—how will a Calvinistic teacher moralize over such a youth? Will he not say, 'Behold a proof of the essential depravity of human nature! See the affinity of man for sin! How fair and deceptive was this young man's virtue, while he was sheltered from temptation; but, oh! how rotten has it proved itself!' Undoubtedly, the Calvinist would and must so moralize. But it struck me, that if I substituted the name of Adam for the youth, the argument proved the primitive corruption of Adam's nature. Adam fell by the first temptation; what greater proof of a fallen nature have I ever given? or was it possible for any one to give? I was surprised to find that there was an *a priori* impossibility of fixing on myself the imputation of degeneracy, without fixing the same on Adam." And if Adam sinned, why should his children be punished for his deed? There is something exceedingly mysterious in the nature of the punishment inflicted on Adam and all his descendants—the ir-

* BAYLE.

resistable propensity to sin*—an irresistable impulse to repeat the act which was prohibited to Adam, and for which he was punished—and this sin subject again to punishment of infinite pains in eternal hell. The justice of Jehovah, as shown in this matter, is of a very queer kind : it has for its object “ neither† the reform of the offender, nor the warning of others, nor the reparation of the evil done.” According to the Rev. Edward Beecher,‡ “ It has been conceded repeatedly that the acts ascribed to God [Jehovah] in his dealings with the human race through Adam do *appear* dishonorable and unjust, according to any principles of equity and honor which God has made the human mind to form.” If a thing *appear* unjust after a fair examination of it, is it not unjust ? What is the difference between appearing and being ? And yet the writer of that sentence and all his school say that God is perfectly good and just, notwithstanding his actions are in direct opposition to our definitions of goodness and justice. Let us recall the punishments inflicted for the eating of that apple by a man who did not know what he was doing. *First*, Adam and Eve were expelled from paradise ; *Secondly*, Adam was condemned to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow ; *Thirdly*, Eve was condemned to bear children in pain ; *Fourthly*, the ground was cursed for their sakes, and ordered to produce thorns and thistles ; *Fifthly*, They were all made unhappy ; *Sixthly*, They were made sinful ; *Seventhly*, Their sinfulness was punished with eternal pains in hell ; *Eighthly*, A few of them were told that they might be saved from those pains if they would believe that the God who had treated them in this manner was the perfection of justice. Adam paid a high price for that apple ; and Diderot is sensible when he comes to the conclusion that Jehovah cares a great deal more for his apples than he does for his children.

As to the questions why the sending of the Savior was postponed to so late a date ; why the knowledge of his doctrines is confined to a small portion of mankind ; why nine-tenths of those who believe his doctrines, ground their faith not on reason but on ignorance, tradition and superstition ;

* STRAUSS.

† LEIBNITZ.

‡ Conflict of Ages. Ch. XVII.

why salvation is made to depend on, faith while faith had nothing to do with the fall ; why Christ's blood would not suffice to atone unconditionally and entirely for Adams sin ; and whether Abraham and his descendants previous to the time of Jesus were saved from eternal hell, there having been no promise to that effect—these are questions which the Bible does not answer expressly or by implication : but they are questions which sensible men should ask, if they believe in the Jehovistic book-revelation.

§ 136. The virginity of Mary, after having conceived and given birth to a child, is exceedingly mysterious. We can safely believe that such an event never happened to more than one woman in the world, though it has been related of a great many. Virgins do not bear children now-a-days. The times are too degenerate. But the Christians say that there is doubt of Mary's maidenhood. It seems that there was a peculiar virtue in that condition which made it a fit medium for a God to pass through ; at least much importance was attached to it ; though we cannot learn what that virtue was. "One of the most subtle disputants of the Manichean school, has pressed the danger and indecency of supposing that the God of the Christian, in the state of a human foetus, emerged at the end of nine months from a female womb. The pious horror of his antagonists provoked them to disclaim all sensuous circumstances of conception and delivery ; to maintain that the divinity passed through Mary like a sunbeam through a plate of glass ; and to assert that the seal of her virginity remained unbroken even at the moment when she became the mother of Christ."*

§ 137. The incarnation is perhaps the greatest of all the Biblical mysteries. It is the union, the intimate and harmonious mixture, the imprisonment, in a few cubic inches, of flesh and blood, of the divine and the human, the finite and the infinite. Jesus was both perfect and imperfect at the same time, sinful and sinless. And he was not a whole but only one-third of one. God is divided into three parts, and one portion of the Trinity (which cannot well be considered separate from the incarnation) was imprisoned in Jesus. He was conceived by a marriageable woman, who

was distinguished in no natural and important point from other women of her age and country. He was carried in the womb and born and bred like other children. He was possessed of a body of real flesh and blood, he was subject to animal wants and desires, and he was fed upon the ordinary food of men. He was circumcised, and he grew in form and spirit to be a man (*Luke II. 40 ; Mat. XI. 19*). He was bred to the trade of a carpenter (*Mark VI. 3*), and he was supposed by his acquaintances to be the son of Joseph (*Luke II 41, 48 ; IV. 22*), and to be a man like other men. He made no claim to be anything more till he was thirty years of age (*Luke III. 23 ; IV. 24 ; Mat. XIII. 54 ; Mark VI. 1 ; John VI. 42*) ; nor did he, previous to that time, utter a sentence worthy of record. On one occasion his relatives thought him to be crazy (*Mark II. 21, 31*). At the age of thirty he proclaimed himself a prophet, but found so little faith at home that he declared "a prophet is not without honor but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house" (*Mark VI. 4 : Mat. XIII. 57 ; John IV. 44*). He was then looked upon at home as an impostor ! Not even his own brothers believed on him (*John VII. 5*) ; and they appear to have cared but little about him, for they are not mentioned as having been present at his seizure, trial, execution, or resurrection. After his mother had given birth to the Creator of the universe, she yielded to the embraces of a man and had children—merely human sons and daughters (*Mat. I. 25 ; XII. 16 : XIII. 55 ; Luke VIII. 19 ; John II. 12 ; Acts I. 14*). After teaching three years, and before he had committed his doctrine to writing, Jesus was arrested on a charge of sedition, tried and executed ; and he, God, died in the midst of great torments. Verily, as Paul says, such things are "foolishness to the natural man."

§ 138. Another Biblical mystery is the atonement. Jesus Christ, one third of God, came to earth to teach pure religion, and while so teaching, was arrested on a charge of crime, and crucified. By being crucified, he atoned for Adam's sin, but only partially. His coming was to be of no benefit to those who died before he came, or to those who should live after his coming without knowing his doctrine, or to those who should know his doctrine without

believing it. Many men had died before the time of Jesus; but their deaths had done no good : many men had prayed for divine favor, but they could not be saved : Jesus alone could save them. But what was the virtue in his blood ? Did his divine nature suffer ? Is Godhood subject of suffering ? Could he not by virtue of his omnipotence save men as well without going through the ceremony of crucifixion, as with it ? Did the suffering of human nature expiate Adam's sin ? If so, why might not the blood of thousands of martyrs before the time of Jesus have sufficed to wipe out the dread offense of eating an apple ? Why was it necessary that the Messiah should be a Jew ? Why was it necessary that he should be a descendant of David ? Why might not the blood of bulls and goats have sufficed to wash out the sin of Adam ? Am I under obligation to adopt the Christian doctrine in regard to all these questions, without being able to think of a solitary argument in their favor ?

If Jehovah, of whom Jesus is part, be the creator and governor of the universe, the great first cause of all existence and events, it appears that this "grand catastrophe of our religion is a most illustrious suicide." * It is the complicated case of God killing himself to appease himself : entirely outdoing the man, who bit off his own nose to spite his face. Or, if it be not a case of suicide, but a sacrifice by one God, Jehovah, of his dearly beloved son, Jesus, another God, then it is a deicide : and this appears scarcely less absurd. "Let us suppose," says Bolingbroke, "a great prince governing a wicked and rebellious people. He has it in his power to punish, but thinks fit to pardon them. But he orders his only and well beloved son to be put to death to expiate their sins, and satisfy his royal vengeance. Would this proceeding appear to the eye of reason, and in the unprejudiced light of nature, wise, just, or good ?" "Whence † could arise the solitary and strange conceit that the Almighty, who has millions of worlds equally dependent on his protection, should quit the care of all the rest, and come to die in our world, because they say one man and one woman had eaten an apple ? And on the other hand, are we to suppose that every world in the boundless creation

* BENTHAM.

† PAINE.

had an Eve, an apple, a serpent, and a redeemer? In this case, the person who is irreverently called the son of God, and sometimes God himself, would have nothing else to do than to travel from world to world in an endless succession of deaths with scarcely a momentary interval of life."

§ 139. Another great mystery of Christianity is the "Trinity." It is worthy of note, however, that that word is not to be found in the Bible, the writers of which, as it seems, did not know their own meaning. There are three gods, Jehovah, Jesus, and the Holy Ghost, and there is only one God, the Lord. It is inconceivable how a God can be one and three at the same time. Fichte thinks that a picture in an old Dresden hymn-book gives a very good idea of the Trinity which is represented as an old man, a young man, and a dove. Perhaps, another illustration of the Trinity might be found in Cerberus, the dog, with one body and three heads, which guarded the entrance of hell, taking care that of those who should go in, none should come out. Not that the Christian Cerberus in person watches at the gates of hell: that would be beneath his dignity: he has a proxy to attend to that duty.

Tertullian, the great leader of the Christian Church of the West, in the fourth century, appears to have had a very clear idea of the nature of the mysteries, and to have understood fully the increasing merit of belief in proportion to the absurdity of the dogma. He wrote "The son of God was crucified; it is no shame to own it because it is a thing to be ashamed of. The son of God died; it is wholly credible because it is absurd. When buried, he rose again to life; it is certain because it is impossible."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE EVILS OF CHRISTIANITY.

Lactantius [300. A. D.] "seemed firmly to expect and almost ventured to promise that the establishment of Christianity would restore the innocence and felicity of the primitive age; that the worship of the true God would extinguish war and dissension among those who mutually considered themselves as the children of a common parent; that every impure desire, every angry and selfish passion would be restrained by the gospel; and that the magistrates might sheath the sword of justice among people who would be universally actuated by the sentiments of truth and piety, of equity and moderation, of harmony and universal love." GIBBON.

It is idle, it is disingenuous to deny or to dissemble the early *depravity* of Christianity, its gradual but rapid departure from its primitive simplicity and purity, still more from its spirit of universal love." MILMAN.

'Christianity was intended to reform the world: had an All-wise Being planned it, nothing is more improbable than that it should have failed: Omniscience would infallibly have foreseen the inutility of a scheme which experience demonstrates to this age to have been utterly unsuccessful.' SHELLEY. 1820 A. D.

§ 140. The Christians appeal for the truth of the Bible to the alleged beneficent effects which follow its reception and the evils which follow its rejection. Now I do not admit that any amount of beneficent influence will prove a dogma, nor would any evil consequence destroy any truth. Truth appeals to reason, not to the sense of pleasure. And yet it seems reasonable to expect that if a revelation were sent from heaven to serve as a guide for men in the conduct of life, it must, of necessity, be productive of some practical benefit, and indeed of benefit greater than could be derived from any mere human teaching. Such benefits have arisen from Christianity, as its advocates assert. They say that civilization and morality have kept equal pace with knowl-

edge of, and faith in, the Bible. Its truths and promises, the hopes of heaven and the fears of hell, have a great and unequalled power in rendering man moral, aiding him to subdue his baser passions, inclining him to justice and morality, and enabling him to free himself from idol-worship, debasing superstitions, and vile propensities. Only among Christians have the arts and sciences reached their highest development; only the influence of the Bible has been able to break down the barbarous customs of ancient times, which considered every stranger an enemy, and might equivalent to right. On the other hand, wherever Christianity has not prevailed, there public and private morality have been at a low ebb, the arts of civilized life have languished, political liberty has disappeared or remained unknown, and its place has been occupied by despotism or anarchy.

Illustrations in support of these assertions are not wanting. The Jews were the only people of antiquity who were not worshippers of idols and who possessed an exalted idea of the Deity, and a high morality. The Greeks and Romans of that early time were polytheists and idol-worshippers, and they represented their divinities as possessed of the most debased characters. The most disgusting vices were then publicly practised, almost without reproach, by the most prominent and influential men. In our own day, the Bible is better known in England and America than in any other lands, and there accordingly are found governments more free, arts more flourishing, and people more moral than in any other lands. Germany and France, where the Bible is less known, are not so prosperous, yet they are far in advance of all the pagan nations and of Catholic countries, where the people are forbidden to read the Bible, and where the popular faith is loaded down with a multitude of superstitions. Sweden and Denmark are Protestant countries, and the people are moral. Italy and Spain are Catholic, and the people are ignorant and debased. And yet the Turks are a grade lower in civilization, being farther removed from the truths of Christianity, and still beyond them are the Chinese and Hindoos, and in the lowest grade of ignorance and debasement are the idolaters of Africa and the Polynesian Islands. But there is a fearful state to which the superstitious and untaught idolator never

reaches, the condition of perfect lawlessness and immorality, the unbridled reign of all that is basest in man's nature, when a nation educated in the truths of Christianity, casts them off and rushes into the arms of atheism. Such was France in 1793, drunk on blood to vomit crime, the horriest of horrors, a great nation of divine intelligence, struck with atheistic frenzy, denying the distinction between virtue and vice, sending all their best men to the guillotine, elevating their meanest to the summit of power, and hurling public order, religion, and morality into one general ruin.

There are several complete answers to all this : *first*, civilization and belief in the Bible do not keep equal pace ; *secondly*, if they did, there is no proof that the former is the effect of the latter ; and *thirdly*, there is strong evidence to show that high enlightenment is generally followed by disbelief in the Bible.

§ 141. Let us see whether Jews and Christians in ancient and modern times have been much superior to the Gentiles and Skeptics? And first for a comparison between the Jews and Greeks—nations which existed about the same time, and between which, partial comparisons have frequently been drawn by Christian writers. All, or nearly all, that we know of these nations, is derived from their own books, and on the first examination of these, a notable difference is perceptible. The Hebrew books are all religious in their character, while the writings of the Greeks are upon all branches of history, philosophy, the fine arts, and the natural sciences. This difference is to be accounted for, partly at least, by the fact that the Jews were a priest-ridden nation ; all their books were written by priests ; all their learning was monopolized by priests ; all their opinions were derived from the priests ; and it may well be supposed that a hereditary, despotic, superstitious, and corrupt priesthood, would tolerate no light literature. Greece on the other hand, had no hereditary, powerful or organized priesthood. Many of the citizens unconnected with the priesthood, such as it was, were as well educated as the priests themselves, could write books as well, and could publish with perfect freedom. Indeed, we may say that Greece had no ecclesiastical literature. But not-

withstanding the very different media, through which we see the two nations, I think we may safely assert, that the Greeks were the nobler and more moral people, as they certainly were the more intellectual.

We have seen (*Ch. VII.*) that previous to the Babylonian captivity, the Jews, as a people, were Polythiests and idolaters, and, according to the declaration of Ezekiel, more immoral than the people of Sodom had ever been. We know also that they were a rude, bloodthirsty, revengeful tribe, harsh towards one another and illiberal and unfriendly towards strangers. While in captivity they became familiar with Zoroastrianism, which, as understood by the Parsees generally, taught the existence of only two divinities, who corresponded to the later Jewish conceptions of Jehovah and Satan. The Jews never were pure Monotheists, for the devil and the angels are only other names for the inferior divinities : and in their approaches to the belief in one sole divine being, they were only the copyists of the Zoroastrians. Undoubtedly their conception of the Divine Nature was superior to that of any other people, except the Parsees : but that alone could not compensate for a vast number of other points in which they were inferior to the Greeks. The Hebrew government was one of the most despotic and debasing which ever existed. A hereditary priesthood, with such influence as the Levites possessed, must necessarily keep any nation at a low state of civilisation. The system of castes is said by all philosophers, who have observed its influence, to be the most damnable invention of tyranny and priestly fraud. It destroys all sense of human equality and dignity, and makes the many to be the abject slaves of the few.

The ancient Jews did nothing for our benefit. They left us no liberal or well-digested laws, no valuable essays on political, moral, social, or religious philosophy, no able historical works, no grammar, no logic, no rhetoric, no great orations, no epics, no tragedies, no comedies, no mathematics, no astronomy, no geography, no mechanical inventions, no great architectural monuments, no statues, no pictures, not even the glory of a great empire. All the peculiar favor of Jehovah, all the miracles, all the prophets with their revelations from heaven did not enable the Jews to rival the un-

assisted human energy and ability of neighboring heathen nations. Voltaire remarks : " Moses changes his ring, before the king, into a serpent, and all the waters of the kingdom into blood ; he creates toads which cover the earth ; he changes the dust into lice ; he fills the air with winged poisonous insects ; he strikes all the men and all the animals of the land with frightful ulcers ; he calls down storms, hail, and thunder-bolts to ruin the country ; he covers it with grasshoppers ; he plunges it into the deepest night for three successive days ; he cuts off the first-born of animals and men, beginning with the heir of the throne ; he passes dry-shod over the bed of the Red Sea, while the waters stand heaped up in mountains on either hand, and after his passage they rush down and overwhelm the army of Pharaoh. After reading all these miracles the thinking man says ' Surely the nation for which and by which all such wonders are done, is destined to be the master of the universe ! ' But no ! They end by suffering famine and misery in arid sands, and after prodigy upon prodigy, they all die before seeing the little corner of earth where their descendants were established for a few years."

The Greeks were far less numerous than the descendants of Jacob (if the numbers given by Moses be correct), and yet how much do we not owe to Greek civilization ? It might almost be said that we owe everything to them. " The beginnings of all our intellectual civilization, of our poetry, music, history, oratory, sculpture, painting, and architecture, of our logical, metaphysical, ethical, political, mathematical and physical science, and of our free political institutions must be traced to the Greeks. They are pre-eminently the aristocracy of the human race. No other nation can ever do for mankind what they did. They found the world immersed in all the darkness of the oriental form of society [such as prevailed among the Jews whose political and social institutions were formed by Jehovah]. Despotic governments enforcing abject submission to the sovereign, and a prohibition of open discussion in assemblies of chiefs or counsellors ; exclusive [and hereditary] priesthoods predominating over the people ; in private life, polygamy, cruel punishments, and bodily mutilations ; art massive, shapeless and grotesque ; the absence of all literature wor-

thy of the name ; no science, no oratory, no drama ; no history beyond a meagre chronicle of the genealogies and acts of the kings ;—such was the state of the most civilized portion of mankind when the influence of the Greek genius began to operate upon the inert mass. It was this which first infused a soul into a lifeless body—it was the Greek Prometheus who stole from heaven the fire which illuminated and warmed these benighted races ; and it was under its excitement that they made the first great step out of the stationary into the progressive state ; that step of which all experience proves the extreme difficulty, even where there is a model at hand to work upon.” Not only did the Greeks lay the foundations of all our present intellectual culture, but they carried many of the highest branches of the arts to an excellence which all the millions of Christian European blood—fifty times more numerous than the Greek kindred—have been unable to surpass—scarcely able to equal. England, Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal have produced their epic poems, but the *Iliad* is the greatest of them all. Pindar’s heroic odes are the models in their kind. The orations of Demosthenes are superior to the greatest efforts of all later orators. The scanty remnants of ancient Grecian sculpture—many of them mere mutilated fragments—have maintained their præmînéncè of merit in spite of all the genius and labor of modern statuaries. Architects of the present day have scarcely a hope to surpass the buildings or improve upon the proportions of Athenian architecture. And although the existing remains of Grecian painting, as at Pompeii, are almost destroyed, and could never have been considered to belong to the higher works in that art, yet it is the opinion of most modern artists who have examined the matter, and, among others, of Raphael Mengs, himself a distinguished painter as well as an able writer, that the pictures of Athens and Rome were as excellent in their kind as are the *Venus de Medicis*, the *Apollo Belvidere*, the *Laocoön*, the *Dying Gladiator*, and the friezes of the *Parthenon* in sculpture.

But the Christians delight to dwell upon the moral purity and devout spirit of the Jews as compared with the Greeks. The latter people, and even their most famous and reputable men, were in the daily and notorious practice of

debasement of vices : and their ordinary conversation, and the common pictures and ornaments in their houses were filled with figures suggesting obscene and disgusting ideas. That the Greeks were different from us in their notions of decency and propriety, is true ; but whether they were more coarse and debased than the Jews, is exceedingly doubtful. There is much to testify against the Greeks—their houses, pictures, statuary, household utensils, and books written by uncensored scribblers ; but there is no such testimony against the Jews, who have left nothing save sermons and annals written by slavish Levites. But even in those sermons and annals, I cannot discover that the Jews had a high morality. The moral standard of their best men never rose to the level of the Grecian philosophers. Judea was remarkably barren of good and great men. The character of Job commands respect, but he is not said to have been a descendant of Abraham. Of the other Biblical heroes, the best are those of whom the least is said. David and Solomon, to whom more space is given in the sacred records than to any other men, were stained with almost every crime. We seek in vain through the whole Bible for characters—for even one character—which may serve as a reasonable approximation to our modern ideal of a high moral nature. According to the sacred records, Israel never had any such men. But among the Greeks there were, in proportion to the total number of their people, multitudes of characters to which we cannot refuse our heartiest admiration—men in whom “ greatness of mind seems but second to greatness of virtue ” * —men whose moral nobility is unsurpassed in our own times—men whose glorious deeds makes the blood of every student of Grecian history tingle with enthusiastic admiration for them as he reads of their deeds. No prominent man has risen in modern Europe to emulate Timoleon ; † America produced a rival, but no superior in Washington. The unparalleled self-sacrifice of Leonidas and his band, the devotion of Socrates to intellectual freedom, and Aristides’ exalted purity and sense of justice, must remain as ideal models to all generations of

* JOHN FOSTER. *Aversion of Men of Taste to Evangelical Religion.*

† See the history of Timoleon in Grote’s *Greece*.

men. The human mind can scarcely conceive a more loveable character than that of Epaminondas. Besides these, there are Solon, Pericles, Pelopidas, Brasidas, Phocion, Anaxagoras, Plato, Democritus, Zeno, Aristotle, and Dion—all of them men whose moral natures were unequalled by any of the priests or kings of Israel.

The French Revolution is the great and favorite bugbear with which to scare the young and ignorant from the horrors of thinking for themselves, used by Robert Hall and others of the hell-worshipping school, who say that but for the fear of punishment in a future state, any man would be a fool, if he should practise love and justice toward his neighbors. The destruction of a few thousand lives is magnified into a monstrous evil as though it had no parallel in the annals of Christian persecution and civil war. The unmeaning worship of the Goddess of Reason maintained for a few days by a few hundred persons, is spoken of as the greatest offense ever committed against society and religion, while the worship of images, relics, saints, and priests, which had debased and degraded millions through many centuries is prudently kept in the background, or referred to as a matter of little importance. The French Revolution, deplorable as were some of its excesses, was yet all in all, a glorious and beneficent event, and its blessings may be accounted as cheaply purchased. The atrocities which accompanied it, were owing chiefly to the ignorance and superstition in which Christian priests and Christian kings had kept the people, to put an end to which was a main purpose of those who brought on the revolution, and in which purpose they succeeded. There is no evidence to show that the crimes of the mob were caused in any respect by their atheistic belief, while there is much to show the evil influence of the general popular ignorance.

§ 142. The assertion that at the present time morality, popular enlightenment, and national prosperity are dependent on, or may be measured by faith in the Bible, is notoriously untrue. The very nations which are cited as proof of the truth of the assertion, are proof of the contrary. England, America, France, and Germany, far from being more Christian than Italy, Spain, Sweden, or Mexico, are vastly more skeptical in proportion to their population :

and it would be far more true, to say that enlightenment keeps step with freethought, than with Christian faith.

Christianity as a human institution, compared with other forms of faith of man's invention, has led to very considerable benefits, which however become trifles, and unworthy of notice, if we compare them with what they should be, were it a revelation given by Infinite Wisdom and Goodness. It has not only permitted the existence of war, tyranny, superstition, bigotry, and intolerance, but it has nourished them to a higher development than they ever rose to under any other system. No system, political, religious or social, has been the occasion of so much bloodshed, and so much malicious and bitter hatred among men as the Christian religion. The history of the wars and prosecutions of Christians against Christians, is the blackest and bloodiest portion of the records of humanity. All such results should have been prevented by the prevalence of a religion, contrived by an all-wise Designer to confer the greatest possible benefits on mankind : and something of this kind, it seems, the too enthusiastic Lactantius really hoped for, when Christianity was at last adopted by the emperor of the Roman world. But his hopes were vain. His religion bred hate and war where none was known before. It abolished the old polytheism and idol-worship to adopt others, little better in their places. It found southern Europe in the possession of a considerable degree of civilization, but was unable to preserve it ; and from the time of the adoption of the new doctrine, as the religion of the Empire, until 1100 A. D., Egypt, Greece, and Italy were sunk far deeper in ignorance, superstition, and immorality than they had been at any time in a thousand years before. For six centuries the Saracens of Spain were the most enlightened, and probably the most moral people of Europe : and Christendom did not begin to awaken to modern civilization till the study of the ancient languages, on the Revival of Learning, opened the minds of scholars to the treasures of the heathen literature of Athens and Rome. The manuscripts of pagan philosophers left the Bible far behind in their influence. With civilization came industrial, social, religious, and political progress, which occurred within the domains of Christianity, but was

owing to it, much less than to the inborn intellectuality of the Saxon, Frank, and Gothic races. Woman was treated with consideration, but no more than she had always received among the Teutonic nations. Political and social slavery was abolished to some extent, because the priesthood had a pecuniary interest in securing a certain degree of freedom for the common people, and still more because, in the course of events, the people became so strong, that they were able to take some of their rights. Polygamy and concubinage became rare, but these had been prohibited by public opinion, or the laws, in Greece and Rome before the time of Jesus. The Bible was a very bendable book : the Church possessed a large number of priests : many of them were learned and good men : they twisted their gospel to suit the demands of modern progress, and the great extent of their faith secured to them a wide hearing and a great influence. The common people, had a thorough though a superstitious conviction of the truth of their faith : and their zeal in observing its dictates was heightened by the fear of the eternal hell-prison-house, which their savior had prepared for those who should see fit to try to enter heaven by some other door than his. Jesus on earth had ordered men to be charitable : and accordingly Christians were "charitable;" that is to say they robbed the poor of their rights and gave them pennies. This charity increased wonderfully when the believers found themselves on their death-beds, and they could hear the roaring of the flames in the pit of destruction. Great and admirable institutions for the ill and the poor, were founded, and self-denying monkish corporations were formed to devote all their attention to deeds of love. Much of this was owing to the influence of superstitious terror : much of it to the pure benevolence, which has its inexhaustible source in the human soul. A religion so nearly universal as Christianity and accepted by nations so enlightened and powerful as those of Europe, would have to be indeed vile, if it should not produce very great benefits. The New Testament doctrine, that all men are equal before God, was the cause of much good, not because it was new, for it was not, having been substantially received in Boodhism, Druidism and the mythology of Greece and Rome, but because under the Christian reign

of Terror, the people were more disposed to practice upon the theory. The Church was rich and it patronized the arts. The priests were numerous : they cultivated learning and educated the people. The church members met on Sunday to hear the " Word of God ;" they learned to know and to appreciate each other. Rich and poor could meet there more nearly on an equality than in any other place on earth. The priests was often sprung from the lower classes and he could not avoid sympathizing with them. The priests keeping up a constant communication between the different parts of the world, aided much to spread and increase the blessings of civilization. Such I understand the benefits of Christianity to be—no more. Many of these benefits are not owing at all to the essence of Christianity but merely to its accidents, and others do it little honor ; while none furnish evidence of any superhuman origin for it. That it has been extravagantly praised, we all know, but this is a natural consequence of its prevalence. I shall now mention some of the evils for which we are indebted to belief in the Bible.

If the faith of Jesus were a great blessing to humanity, we might expect to find the strongest evidence of its benefits among the priesthood who are called to study the Word of God continually, and who are ordained under divine authority to serve as teachers and guides to mankind. But if there be any one class in Christendom which can be looked upon, more than any other, as the practisers and defenders of superstition and tyranny, that class is certainly the Christian clergy. In England, in Italy, in Spain, and in Mexico the stall-fed ministers of Jehovah are the scourges of the people ; and if they could be swept away in a revolution, a few thousand lives would be a small consideration in comparison—particularly if they were the lives of those who resist the grant of popular liberty and education. I rejoice in the hope of that revolution—without blood, if possible—but the revolution ! Human rights are cheap at any cost of tyrants' blood, and if the people see fit to spill their blood in their own defense, no one has a right to complain.

Priestcraft in all ages and nations has been the same. " Such* is the knavery and such the folly of mankind, that no example, ancient or modern, Pagan or Christian, can be

* BOLINGBROKE.

produced of an organized priesthood that, once established, have not aimed at acquiring from their institution, and that have not acquired, sooner or later, exorbitant wealth and immoderate power." The nature of the Christian clergy is essentially evil ;* its object is self-gratification and self-aggrandizement ; the means which it uses are the basest frauds and the most shameless delusions practised on the popular mind for the acquisition of power ; and that power once gained, it is exercised in the most fierce and bloody manner to render it at once awful and perpetual. Nothing has been so servilely mean when weak ; when strong, nothing so daring in assumption, so arrogant in command,—earth, heaven, the very throne and existence of God himself being used as the tools of its designs, and appealed to with horrible impudence in the most shameless of its lies. Professing itself merciful, nothing on this earth, which is by no means wanting in scenes of terror, has ever exhibited itself in shapes of equal cruelty—cruelty, selfish and impassible : claiming sanctity as its peculiar attribute, nothing has been so grossly debauched and licentious ; assuming the men of humility, nothing is so impiously proud, so offensively insolent ; proclaiming to others the utter vanity of worldly goods, its cupidity is insatiable of worldly honors, its ambition is boundless ; affecting peace and purity, it has perpetrated the most savage wars, in the very name of Heaven, and spread far and wide the contagion of sensuality ; in Europe, usurping the chair of knowledge, the office of proclaiming a religion which is offered as the greatest wealth of humanity, it has locked up the human mind for more than a thousand years in the dens of ignorance ; mocked it with the vilest baubles, the most imbecile legends ; made it a prey to all the restless and savage passions of an uncultivated and daily irritated soul, robbed it of its highest joys in the exercise of a perfected intellect and a benevolent spirit, and finally, by its tyrannies, its childish puerilities, its insane pomps, and most ludicrous dogmas, overwhelmed the people, wherever it had power, with an iron bigotry and degrading superstition.

"I am aware," says Channing, "that I shall be told that Christianity, judged by its history, has no claim to the

† The remainder of this paragraph is altered from WM. HOWITT History of Priestcraft.

honorable title of a religion of liberty. I shall be told that no system of heathenism ever weighed more oppressively on men's souls ; that the Christian ministry has trained tyrants who have tortured now the body with material fire, and now the mind with the dread of fiercer flames, and who have proscribed and punished free thought and free speech as the worst of crimes ;" and he prays that Christianity shall not be held " to answer for it," because " Christianity gives its ministers no such power." But Christianity does give its ministers such power ; just as much as any prevalent system gives the power by which its agents do evil. All the intolerance, all the superstition, all the tyranny, all the wars, and all the inquisitions which the Christian clergy in this age maintain, are fully justified by the examples of those Jewish priests who acted under the immediate inspiration of Jehovah—all have their sanction in that Bible which is held out as "The Word of God."

§ 143. The character and actions ascribed to God are such, that his worshippers must rejoice in the damnation of nine-tenths of the human race. I have already quoted (§ 48) some passages from Jonathan Edwards, Massillon and Tertullian (some of the greatest men of the Christian Church), showing their sentiments upon the proportionate number of the elect, the nature of future punishment, and the manner in which faithful Christians should look upon the miseries of the damned. Since the spirit of Christianity is here at stake, I shall venture a few more extracts. I know well that according to one of the Evangelists, "God is love"; but I know also that all the great logicians in the Christian Church, who have ventured to express themselves clearly upon the means of salvation and the nature of future punishment, have adopted the Calvinistic doctrines, which represent Jehovah as hate incarnate,—a being more wicked and detestable than any other conception of character, which has ever been presented to the human mind. All the demons of romance, all the scoundrels of history are angels of light in comparison with him ; and if I had to choose between worshipping a Nero, a Caligula, a Tiberius, a Borgia and a Mephistopheles on one side, and the Christian Jehovah on the other, I should not hesitate for a moment in preferring the former.

Protestant Christianity is generally understood to mean Calvinism, "which is the doctrine of the Established Churches of England and Scotland,"* and of about two-thirds of the Protestant Church-congregations in the United States. The doctrines of Calvinism are that men are so formed that they are by nature wholly inclined to all moral evil; that, in consequence of this nature, God inflicts on those, who remain as they were thus formed to be, the most terrible punishments; that he will be their eternal enemy and infinite tormentor; that having hated them from their birth, he will continue to exercise upon them forever his unrelenting and omnipotent hatred; and that, though he has chosen some to be saved out of the common ruin, their number is comparatively small.

"Grace," says Calvin, "snatches from the curse and wrath of God, and from eternal death a few, who would otherwise perish: but leaves the world in the ruin to which it has been ordained" (*Inst. L. III. C. 22. § 7*). And again he says "All things being at God's disposal, and the decision of salvation or death belonging to him, he orders all things by his counsel and decree in such manner that some men are born devoted from the womb to certain death: that his name may be glorified in their destruction" (*C. 23. § 6*). Elsewhere he says "The whole race of Adam is by nature under a *curse*, so that even infants, before being born to light, are liable to eternal death." Hell is paved with the skulls of infants not a span long: and the mothers lounge about on the benches in heaven, and, looking down, laugh as they see the little souls of their children broiling on the infernal coals. "You deny," says the Genevan reformer in reply to Castalio,—"You deny that it is lawful for God to damn any one unless for actual transgression. Innumerable infants are taken from life. Put forth now your virulence against God, who plunges into eternal death harmless infants, torn from their mother's breasts:" "their whole nature is, as it were, a seed of sin: so that it cannot be otherwise than odious and abominable to God." In his *Confession* Calvin says "We are every one of us born infected with original sin, and from our mother's womb are under the curse of God, and a sentence of damnation." The

* North British Review. Feb., 1851.

Westminster Assembly declared that "God by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time," "hath chosen some men to eternal life," and "hath passed by and foreordained the rest to dishonor and wrath to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise and glory of his justice." The synod of Dort, which defined the canons of Calvinism, declared that, "as all men have sinned in Adam, and become obnoxious to a curse and eternal death, God would have done injustice to no one, if he had willed to leave the whole human race in sin, and under a curse, and to damn them on account of sin." The same Synod agreed that "All men are conceived in sin, and born children of wrath, without ability for any good tending to salvation, inclined to evil, dead in sins, and slaves of sin : and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, have neither will, nor power to return to God, to correct their depraved nature, or to dispose themselves to its correction." According to the Church of England, "the condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith, and calling upon God."

Again Calvin says "Predestination by which God adopts some to the hope of life, and adjudges others to eternal death, no one desirous of the credit of piety, dare absolutely to deny. * * * Now with respect to the reprobate, as Jacob without any merit yet acquired by good works, is made an object of grace, so Esau, while yet unpolluted by any crime is accounted an object of hatred (*Rom. IX. 13*). If we turn our attention to works, we insult the apostle, as though he saw not that which is clear to us. Now that he saw none is evident because he expressly asserts the one to have been elected, and the other rejected, while they had not yet done any good or evil, to prove the foundation of divine predestination not to be in works. Secondly, when he raises the question whether God is unjust, he never urges what would have been the most absolute and obvious defence of his justice,—that God rewarded Esau according to his wickedness : but contents himself with a different solution,—that the reprobate are raised up for this purpose, that the glory of God may be displayed by their means.

Lastly he subjoins a concluding observation that ' God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth !' You see how he attributes both to the mere will of God. If therefore we can assign no reason why he grants mercy to his people, but because such is his pleasure, neither shall we find any other cause but his will for the reprobation of others : for when God is said to harden, or show mercy to whom he pleases, men are taught by this declaration to seek no cause beside his will."

Jonathan Edwards, as the greatest Calvinist after Calvin himself, adds the following commentary to these doctrines : " The view * of the misery of the damned will double the ardor of the love and gratitude of the saints in heaven. The sight of hell-torments will exalt the happiness of the saints forever. It will not only make them more sensible of the greatness and freeness of the grace of God in their happiness : but it will really make their happiness the greater, as it will make them more sensible of their own happiness : it will give them a more lively relish of it : it will make them prize it more. When they see others, who were of the same nature, and born under the same circumstances, plunged in such misery, and they so distinguished, Oh ! it will make them sensible how happy they are ! A sense of the opposite misery, in all cases, greatly increases the relish of any joy, or pleasure." And again he says * " The God that holds you over the pit of hell, such as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked : his wrath towards you burns like fire : he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight : you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes, as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince ; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else that you did not go to hell the last night : that you was suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep ; and there is no other reason to be given why you have not dropped into hell, since you arose in the morning, but that God's

* Sermon on the Eternity of Hell-Torments.

† Sermon on Sinners in the hand of an angry God.

hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given, why you have not gone to hell, since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not, at this very moment, drop down into hell."

Among the great Calvinistic writers, Baxter has a high place, and he expresses himself as follows : †. "The torments of the damned must needs be extreme, because they are the effect of divine revenge. Wrath is terrible, but revenge is implacable. * * Consider also how this justice and revenge will be the delight of the Almighty. Though he would rather men would stoop to Christ, and accept of his mercy, yet, when they persist in rebellion, he will take pleasure in their execution. * * Wo to the soul which God rejoiceth to punish. Yea, he tells the simple ones that love simplicity, and the scorers that delight in scorning, and the fools that hate knowledge, 'that because he called and they refused, he stretched out his hand, and no man regarded, but set at nought all his counsel, and would none of his reproof : therefore he will also laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh' (*Prov. I. 22-25*). .

* * * Is it not a terrible thing to a wretched soul, when it shall lie roaring perpetually in the flames of hell, and the God of mercy himself shall laugh at them, when they shall cry out for mercy, yea for one drop of water, and God shall mock them instead of relieving them ; when none in heaven or earth can help them but God, and he shall rejoice over them in their calamity. Why, you see these are the very words of God himself in the Scripture."

Neither let any one tell me that I am guilty of any misrepresentation or unfairness here ; that Calvinism is not Christianity. I do assert that Calvinism is Christianity, and that it is recognized to be Christianity in its essential features by nine-tenths of the sincere Christians, who have made their faith a matter of study. Examine the language of the Scripture itself :—

"The carnal mind is enmity against God." .*Rom. VIII. 7.*

"Learn in us not to think above that which is written." 1 *Cor.* IV. 6.

"Many be called, but few chosen." *Mat.* XX. 16.

"Jews and Gentiles" "are all under sin." *Rom.* III. 9.

"There is none righteous ; no, not one." *Rom.* III. 10.

"By the deeds of the law" "shall no flesh be justified." *Rom.* III. 20.

"I know that in me dwelleth no good thing." *Rom.* VII. 18.

"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth." *Rom.* IX. 18.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What, if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction : and that he might make known the riches of his glory, on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." *Rom.* IX. 21-23.

"When Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Jacob (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth ;), it was said unto her, 'The elder shall serve the younger', as it is written, 'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.' What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid ! For he saith to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.' So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." *Rom.* IX. 10-16.

"God hath not cast away his people, which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 'Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars ; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.' But what saith the answer of God unto him? 'I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal'. Even so, at this present time

also, there is a *remnant*, according to the election of grace." *Rom. XI. 2-5.*

"By grace are ye saved, through faith ; and that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God." *Eph. II. 8.*

"We [Jews] were by nature the children of wrath even as others." *Eph. II. 3*

"All the world is become guilty before God." *Rom. III. 19, 23.*

"No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." *John VI. 44.*

"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." *Acts XIII. 48.*

"Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." *Eph. IV. 7.*

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do his good pleasure." *Philip. II. 12, 13.*

This is a fair representation of the spirit of all Paul's writing ; and it is pure Calvinism. So it was understood by St. Augustine who wrote that "By an unconditional divine decree, we are all predestined either to eternal happiness or damnation. All heathens, whose apparent virtues are only splendid vices, and even all children, which die without baptism, are lost. Salvation can be attained only by grace ; free will is powerless to save."

Persons who have never examined the doctrines of the Bible may imagine that it teaches the possibility of every man's attaining salvation by his own efforts. But the Christian commentators recognize no such doctrine ; they teach that no one can believe without assistance from Jehovah. The Protestants are divided into two great classes—the Calvinists and the Arminians ; both say that men are saved by grace, and by grace only ; and the difference between them is, that the former say that if God sends his grace upon any man, he cannot help but believe and be saved ; whereas, the Arminians declare that the man can resist and be damned if he insists upon it. I have made the following extracts from the Arminian Confession of Faith :—God "determined from all eternity to bestow salvation on those whom he foresaw would persevere unto the end in their faith in Jesus Christ, and to inflict everlasting punishment on

those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist unto the end his divine succors ;” “ that none who do not believe in Christ can partake of the divine benefit” of his sacrifice ; “ that true faith cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural faculties and powers, nor from the force and operation of free will ; since man, in consequence of his natural corruption, is incapable either of thinking or doing any good ; and, therefore, that it is necessary to his conversion and salvation that he be regenerated and renewed by the operations of the Holy Ghost ;” “ that this divine grace or energy of the Holy Ghost, which heals the disorders of a *corrupt* nature, begins, advances, and brings to perfection everything that can be called good in man ; and that consequently, all good works, without exception, are to be attributed to God and to the operation of his grace.”

The people who publish this are the anti-Calvinists, and between the two they occupy all the high places in the evangelical Christian churches. “ If a man speak of human virtue as meritorious in the sight of God” it is generally concluded that he is not a Calvinist ; if a man speak of divine grace as being powerless to save against the will of those to whom it is offered, it is generally concluded that he is an Arminian.

Such doctrines are a subject rather for satire than for logical argumentation, and I cannot attain my end in opposing them better than by making the following quotation from *The Widow Bedott Papers*, by Miss Miriam Berry :

“ REV. MR. PRICE.—How does Mr. Shaw feel ?

MRS. SHAW.—I regret to say that he does not feel his lost and ruined condition as sensibly as I could wish. Oh ! Oh ! If that man *only* had saving faith—and if Serapheen [her daughter] was *only* a Christian, my happiness would be complete.

MR. P.—Y-e-s. I trust that you wrestle for them without ceasing at the Throne of Grace ;

MRS. S.—I do so, Mr. Price, I do so.

MR. P.—And do you feel that in case the Lord should see fit to disregard your petitions, and consign them to everlasting misery, you could acquiesce in his decrees, and rejoice in their destruction ?

MRS. S.—I feel that I could, without a murmur.

MR. P.—Y-e-s. I am very happy, sister Shaw, to find you in such a desirable state of mind.”

“If true religion* be adapted to produce the most excellent virtues by holding forth the most powerful motives and sanctions, and requiring that these should be regarded in every moral action, we cannot therefore infer that the same effect is to be expected from a religion which traffics in pardons for sin ; or from a religion which teaches that the main thing is to perform certain rites and to regard certain observances ; or from a religion which insists on the reception of a system of doctrines as the sure and only passport to eternal happiness ; and still less from one which brings virtue into contrast with some other requisition or characteristic, and makes light of the former, and regards it even as a subject of contempt and jealousy in comparison with the latter,—denominating all human excellence by some such title as *the filthy rags of self-righteousness*. If it be the genuine operation of a true religion to produce a constant effort after moral perfection, because it teaches that good and evil are before us, and that it is for us to choose and attain which we will ; we cannot conclude that this will be the operation of a religion which inculcates as a fundamental truth, the doctrine that we have no moral power, that our condition will not at all depend on anything which we may do ; but that our eternal happiness or misery has been determined by the pleasure of another being, who has issued his irreversible decrees without reference to any qualities which he may see in us. * * * What shall we say of a religion which teaches that He has formed men so, that they are by nature inclined to all moral evil ; that he has determined in consequence to inflict upon the greater part of our race the most terrible punishments ; and that unless he has seen fit to place us among the small number of those whom he has chosen out of the common ruin, he will be our eternal enemy and infinite tormentor ; that having hated us from our birth, he will continue to exercise upon us forever his unrelenting and omnipotent hatred ! * * * Yet he must be a very ignorant or a very bold man who will affirm that the doctrines last stated have not been taught, and

* NORTON. True and False Religion.

very extensively too, as fundamental doctrines of Christianity."

I know very well that there are many Christians who are not Calvinists—who believe that all good men will be saved—who imagine that God is really love, and suppose that he permits the existence of evil only because he cannot help himself: but these persons are not logicians: they do not make their religious dogmas a matter of study: they trust that the universe must be governed by such benevolent feelings as they perceive in their own minds. All these persons are more or less heretical: many of them go so far as to think that an honest and good man, who rejects the Bible after a fair examination of the evidence on both sides, will be just as likely to go to Heaven as if he received it. Such persons have no right to set up their heresies as Christianity and assert that Calvinism is a corruption.

Every Christian believer requires the most undoubting confidence in his own salvation, (a confidence which it is very difficult for the majority to obtain, while they consider their own imperfections and doubts) or the blindest carelessness as to his future fate, as a protection against the most overwhelming fear of condemnation to hell. And no matter how confident he may be of his own salvation, he must always, if he care much for others, be in terror for the fate of those who are dear to him, and of whose piety and compliance with the demands of the Scripture, he can never be entirely certain. Who has not observed the vain but sad terrors, the deep sufferings caused to Christian parents, filled with the deepest love for their children, to see them neglect or reject the special form of faith, in which alone they themselves trust for salvation. Imagine, reader, for a moment that you were a Christian believing with the fullest confidence in the orthodox doctrine of the damnation of the greater portion of the human race for unbelief, imagine, that you were in Heaven as Lazarus was, and could look down into the bottomless pit, and there see your wife, your brother, your sister, and your friends, broiling upon a slow fire, groaning and shrieking, quivering and writhing, with the blood and grease stewing out over the whole surface of the blackened, smoking and distorted flesh—imagine such a picture and try to be happy in the thought,

in the expectation that that picture in all its dread reality shall be present to you throughout eternity. "Thousands of deeply penitent and humble minded persons have lived many years, and perhaps died, in a state of deep depression, because they could not attain to that confident assurance that their sins would be pardoned, which they were told was essential to salvation : while murderers have gone to the gibbet, exulting in strains of rapture as though they were being carried to the stake, as faithful martyrs of Jesus Christ." *

§ 144. The Bible teaches intolerance. Under the Mosaic law, all heretics were to be destroyed. Moses commanded that the false prophet and idolaters should be stoned : Israel should wash its hands of the sin. Whenever it is mentioned in the sacred history that a monarch tolerated heathen worship, it is mentioned as a blot upon his piety—as a cause why Jehovah could not look with full favor upon him : and those monarchs who destroyed the altars and slew the priests of Baal, are held out as models of godliness. Certainly, it would be a difficult matter to find any text favorable to toleration in the Old Testament ; and it would be quite as difficult to deduce the doctrine from the teachings of the New. Paul cursed the man who should teach a doctrine different from his own. The belief that unbelievers will all go to hell, must make men uncharitable and intolerant. It is not possible that it should be otherwise. We are too much interested in the welfare of our fellows to look with friendliness or indifference on a man who is endeavoring, even with good intentions, to propagate such doctrines as must bring every one, who accepts them, into infinite and endless pain. The sincere Christian must hate all heretics and skeptics with a holy hatred, and he must resort to every means within his reach to prevent the spread of their doctrines. If he folds his hands, and looks listlessly on their labors, he becomes an accomplice in their rebellion against Jehovah ; he will be partly to blame for the infinite suffering which they must cause. Zealous Christians must resort to all kinds of persecution—to every possible means which may serve to prevent the spread of an evil, in comparison with which all sufferings on earth are a trifle. If one soul can be saved from hell at the cost of the

* Christian Observer. January. 1844.

burning of a thousand infidels, its salvation will be obtained at a cheap rate. The fleeting pains of ten thousand men for a few hours in this life, are as nothing in comparison with the incomparably more agonizing suffering of one soul throughout all eternity. "What considerations of temporal happiness, or misery," asks Mrs. Stowe (*Dred. Ch. XV.*) "can shake the constancy of the theologian, who has accustomed himself to contemplate and discuss as a cool intellectual exercise the eternal misery of generations? who worships a God that creates myriads only to glorify himself in their eternal torments?"

The intolerant conduct of Christians and Christian churches causes a vast amount of cant and hypocrisy. At least, two thirds of the more intelligent men in the United States are "infidels;" but they dare not say so because it is not popular. At least four fifths of the American editors are "infidels," but they dare not say so, because it would be unpopular. "The English and the Americans," says Emerson, "cant beyond all other nations." The Church is the cause of this cant, and loves it. The Church demands it as "the tribute which vice pays to virtue," according to their phrase—"as the tribute which slaves and dastards pay to bigotry and superstition," according to my phrase. There is no slavery which degrades and debases a man so much as the slavery of the mind, one of the worst forms of which is hypocrisy. When the toppling edifice of Christianity at last tumbles, we shall see men who will dare to speak their sentiments on matters of religion.

Men cannot worship a God, and receive with reverence the writings of his supposed prophets, without imbibing, to some extent, their spirit as described in the Sacred Scriptures. If they have full faith that God's greatest favorites on earth held men in deep political and social slavery, had numerous wives, concubines, and eunuchs, and committed assassination, adultery, barbarous cruelty toward their enemies and unpalliated faithlessness toward their friends, having, at the same time, no redeeming features of high morality—if they can believe that, then their own virtue has reached a dangerous position. If such deeds can be right for others, why not for themselves? Does the nature of right change? Does God grant dispensations to his favorites? Besides, the

mere complication of duties, by the required observance of a multitude of ceremonies which are necessary to the maintenance of an outward church, is in itself a serious evil, and must prevent the mind from giving the proper attention to the dictates of mere human virtue. Hypocritical ceremony and earnest morality are natural enemies : they do not like to occupy the same house.

The tendency of the Bible is to dethrone conscience ; to encourage men to do good, not for the pleasure which it affords, by gratifying the noblest impulse of the mind, but for the sake of the reward, which is to be paid in another life. And, therefore, Christians generally declare that the hope of heaven, and the fear of hell are the only sanctions of morality ; and that if they did not exist, he would be a fool who would not be a rogue. St. Paul declares, " If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not : let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die" (1. *Cor.* XV. 32). That is to say, if he did not expect to be rewarded in heaven, he would live in an entirely different manner, spending his time in all kinds of licentious indulgence. And so, too, Robert Hall declared that without a hell, " a deviation from rectitude would become the part of wisdom, and should the path of virtue be obstructed by disgrace, torment, or death, to persevere would be madness and folly." Paley said that virtue consists in " doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of eternal happiness." Watson warned Gibbon that if he should succeed in overthrowing Christianity, he would free the world from " every powerful incentive to virtue." And John Quincy Adams wrote that belief in " a future state of rewards and punishments" is absolutely essential as a foundation of morality. And although these expressions are disapproved of by many Christians, yet it appears to me that they are justified by the general spirit of the Bible itself. When that book, in its position as the master of the religious belief of nations, asserts that man's greatest merit and demerit are not matters of volition, but of belief, it corrupts and debases man, denies the authority of his conscience and reason, and subjects him to an arbitrary rule that can never harmonize with the natural faculties which should guide him.

The merit of faith cannot be exalted without depreciating the value of moral action. The Bible asserts that the highest merit lies in actions which have no moral quality ; or which are decidedly immoral. It makes a virtue of belief—of blind belief. It declares that the highest moral actions are less meritorious than such credulity as may be expected from every fool. The Christian Deity burns with a bitter hate against Franklin, Jefferson, Hume, Fichte, and Spinoza, and condemns them to the hottest flames of hell, while his bosom glows with delight as he contemplates the frantic capers of every benighted Methodist.

The consequence of such a belief is that many of the Christians dislike the teacher or preacher who appeals chiefly to the conscience as a rule of moral conduct. The truth of this statement was discovered by that eminent and excellent clergyman, Sydney Smith, who complained that "It is impossible to describe the gloom and misery which fanaticism is everywhere producing, or the degradation of human reason and the destruction of comfort by which its course is marked. And the grievous misfortune is that there is no remedy. What answer can be made to a mistaken enthusiast who refers you to his impulses and feelings ? In what way is it possible to illumine an understanding which supposes religion not to consist in what you do, but in what you believe ; not in performing the divine commandment, but merely in admitting it to be divine, though you disobey it ? One perceptible consequence of the mischievous doctrines is an increasing cry against morality and moral doctrines, so that it almost requires an apology from any teacher of religion, if he wishes to enforce anything useful and practical, from the pulpit." And how could it well be otherwise ? The great object of Christianity is not to make men good and kindly toward their brethren in this world, but to save the greatest possible number of souls for the next one.

Connected with this false theory of duty, are the degrading tenets of future rewards and punishments—tenets which are not so debasing in themselves as in the manner in which they are taught, not inconsistently with some portions of the New Testament. Emerson in his *Essay on Compensation* gives the popular Christian dogma as he once heard it expounded in Church. "The preacher, a

man esteemed for his orthodoxy, unfolded in the ordinary manner the doctrine of the last judgment. He assumed that judgment is not executed in this world: that the wicked are successful: that the good are miserable: and then urged from reason, and from Scripture, a compensation to be made to both parties in the next life. No offence appeared to be taken by the congregation at this doctrine. As far as I could observe, when the meeting broke up, they separated without remark on the sermon.

“Yet what was the import of this teaching? What did the preacher mean by saying, that the good are miserable in the present life? Was it that houses and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised: and that a compensation is to be made to these hereafter, by giving them the like gratification another day,—bank-stock and doubloons, venison and champagne? This must be the compensation intended: for, what else? Is it that they are to have leave to pray and to praise? to love and serve men? Why, they can do that now. The legitimate inference the disciple would draw, was: ‘We are to have such a good time as the sinners have now:’ or to push it to its extreme import,—‘You sin now; we shall sin by-and-by: we would sin now, if we could: not being successful, we expect our revenge to-morrow.’”

When a man becomes enslaved to such dogmas, when he looks to any external source for the guide of his action, when he dethrones his own conscience, when he imagines that virtue is anything but obedience to the high impulses of his own soul, then he is far down, and may need a superstitious creed to protect him from the terrors of his own imagination: and is thus doubly debased.

§ 145. The Bible is the chief stronghold of conservatism, the great armory whence she draws her weapons to be used in the warfare against Progress. Wherever in Christendom the friends of human rights are working to free humanity from the shackles of enslaving prejudice, custom, law and class, there the Bible-worshippers are in the way: there they appeal to their superannuated Gospel to show that resistance to tyrants is rebellion against God. Submission to the king and the aristocracy, is preached

every Sunday to the English poor : submission to the master is preached every Sunday to the American slave. When demands are made for a repeal of the laws of primogeniture, of the laws subjecting women to great disabilities and serious wrongs, of the commerce-shackling usury-laws—these demands are met with an appeal to the Bible. Whichever way the stream of progress seeks to flow, there the Bible rises as a dam. That dam must be torn away. Conservatism may be good, but it should be compelled to use none save fair means : the friends of progress may sometimes be too hasty, but let them have fair play. Let them not be defeated with the mere weapons of superstition.

§ 146. The Bible forbids the free use of reason. It claims to be of divine authority, of authority superior to human reason ; and it threatens all unbelievers with the pains of hell. In no place does it enjoin devotion to truth, for its own sake ; it never teaches that truth should be sought by impartial, open, and bold investigation. The threatened penalty for unbelief is a denunciation of investigation into the truth of the Bible, and of the doubt which must always precede a beneficial examination. Few men will desire to investigate a question, the examination of which would, according to their belief, lead to their condemnation to suffer infinite torments in eternal hell. By denouncing doubt, and discouraging investigation, it discredits reason, and thus would deprive us of our only natural guide in the search of religious truth : it would cut off the resource in which we should confidently rely, and a proud reliance on which is productive of the most ennobling and beneficial influences ; as distrust of it, and preference for the guidance of tradition and hereditary dogmas, has in all ages degraded man, and led to the basest superstition, the most horrid bigotry, and the most abominable crimes.

“ A good man,” says Jeremy Taylor, “ that believes what, according to his light, and the use of his moral industry, he thinks true, whether he hits upon the right, or not, because he hath a mind desirous of truth, and prepared to believe every truth, is therefore acceptable to God.” “ This” says Norton, “ is admirable. But it is melancholy to think that we have so long been accustomed to nothing but what

is bigoted, and narrow, and irrational on the subject of religion, that we feel delight in the expression of any generous or manly sentiment, though it be nothing but the most obvious truth. We are like those who have been so long confined within the walls of a prison, that they are filled with emotion at being restored to the common light and air."

The appeal to miracles and prophecies as proof of the truth of doctrines, is an insult to reason, and if it be recognized as proper, it degrades humanity. An absurd dogma, which is, and cannot be made reasonable to my understanding, is held out to me with an order to believe,—not a request to examine. At the same time I am told belief will be rewarded with a sugar plum, and disbelief with a whipping; and, as the only proof for the truth of his doctrine, the retailer of salvation tells me that two thousand years ago Jesus turned water into wine. Jesus never asks men to believe except on the evidence of prophecies and miracles; he never endeavors to open the reason, so that his doctrine shall make its home there, and hold its place in defiance of all adverse teaching, supported only by juggling evidence; and when the cities refuse to believe his doctrines on the faith of his tricks, he damns them to a worse fate than that of Sodom or Gomorrah. The worship of such a God degrades and debases man.

"You have all heard," says Channing, "of the outward evils, which religion, when turned into tyranny, has inflicted; how it has dug dreary dungeons, kindled fires for the martyr, and invented instruments of exquisite torture. But to me all this is less fearful than its influence over the mind. When I see the superstitions which it has fastened on the conscience, the spiritual terrors with which it has haunted and subdued the ignorant and susceptible, the dark, appalling views of God which it has spread far and wide, the dread of inquiry which it has struck into superior understandings, and the servility of spirit which it has made to pass for piety,—when I see all this, the fire, the scaffold, and the outward inquisition, terrible as they are, seem to me inferior evils. I look with solemn joy on the heroic spirits, who have met freely and fearlessly pain and death in the cause of truth and human rights. But there are other victims of intolerance, on whom I look with unmixed sorrow. They are

those who, spell-bound by early prejudice, or by intimidations from the pulpit and the press, dare not think ; who anxiously stifle every doubt or misgiving in regard to their opinions, as if to doubt were a crime ; who shrink from the seekers after truth as from infection ; who deny all virtue, which does not wear the livery of their own sect ; who, surrendering to others their best powers, receive unresistingly a teaching which wars against reason and conscience ; and who think it a merit to impose upon such as live within their influence, the grievous bondage which they bear themselves. How much to be deplored is it, that religion, the very principle which is designed to raise men above the judgment and power of man, should become the chief instrument of usurpation over the soul."

That subjection to superstition is injurious to the morality and happiness of any people scarcely needs to be asserted here. It is of the very essence of superstition to be a curse. The evils of the belief in demoniac possession, in witches, in the divine authority of those bodies of priests, who have riveted the bonds of social and political tyranny in a hundred states, are undeniable. The belief in an immediate divine government of the universe is not less productive of evil. It "refers * all merit and demerit to bad and good fortune, and causes the successful man to be always considered as a good man, and the unhappy man as an object of divine vengeance. It furnishes ignorant and designing men with a power which is sure to be abused,—the cry of a *judgment*, a *judgment*, is always easy to make, but not easy to resist. It encourages the grossest superstitions ; for if the Deity rewards and punishes on every slight occasion, it is quite impossible but that such a helpless being as man will set himself at work to discover the will of heaven in the appearances of outward nature, to apply all the phenomena of thunder, lightning, wind, and every striking appearance, to the regulation of his conduct ; as the poor Methodist, when he rode into Piccadilly in a thunder storm, imagined that all the uproar of the elements was a mere hint to him not to preach at Mr. Romaine's chapel. Hence a great deal of error and a great deal of secret misery. This doctrine of a theocracy, must necessa-

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rily place an excessive power in the hands of the clergy ; it applies so instantaneously and so tremendously to men's hopes and fears, that it must make the priest omnipotent over his people, as it always has done where it has been established." It has a great tendency to check human exertions, and to prevent the employment of those secondary means of effecting an object which nature has placed in our power.

The main object of Jesus is not to teach men how to live at all, but how to die. The life beyond the grave ought to be, the only subject of a Christian's contemplation. To secure an entrance to the gates of heaven, he should hesitate at no sacrifice. Poverty, fasting, humility, passive submission to all forms of oppression, blind faith in the traditions of his grandmother, careful avoidance of every one suspected of thinking for himself, self-denial, self-castration, and monkery—these are the glorious virtues which shall serve as keys to unlock the celestial gates. The Christian's surest hope for heaven is in making earth a hell. He must serve God by mortifying the appetites which God gave.

CHAPTER XXV.

PHYSIOLOGY VS. A FUTURE STATE.

"Frown not upon me, churlish priest ! that I
Look not for life, where never life may be :
I am no sneerer at thy phantasy ;
Thou pitiest me,—alas ! I envy thee,
Thou bold discoverer in an unknown sea,
Of happy isles, and happier tenants there :
I ask thee not to prove a Sadducee.*
Still dream of Paradise, thou knowst not where,
But lov'st too well to bid thine erring brother share."
BYRON.

§ 147. The New Testament asserts that the human mind or soul, will live forever after the death of the body, in the possession of consciousness and sensation, with the personality and individuality which characterize the man on earth, with thought and memory, and with capabilities of feeling pleasure and pain. That is to say after dying upon earth, every man will awaken to a new life, in which he will continue to be the same man as before, so far as his mind and thoughts are concerned. Jesus "came," as his followers say, "to bring life and immortality to light," to save men from infinite pain, and to secure to them infinite pleasure, in the future state of existence: and thus, the dogma becomes one of the most important of the Christian creed. When it falls, Christianity must fall with it. I shall endeavor to prove it to be false, and I shall base my arguments against it, principally on the facts of physiology.

* I place the words of the great poet at the head of this chapter, without adopting all his sentiments. Although he was a decided and active enemy of Christianity, he did not see fit to carry his hostility very far. I should be sorry, to deprive any one of the pleasures they may find in the hope of a future life, but the fear of any such result shall not prevent me from endeavoring to do justice to the cause of science, and intellectual freedom. The poet does not ask the priest "to prove a Sadducee," neither do I; but I ask that men shall make themselves familiar with all important truths of Physiology, and if they become "Sadducees" thereafter, they may thank natural philosophy—not me.

All known natural objects are divided into three kingdoms : the mineral, vegetable, and animal. These three kingdoms are intimately related to each other in many respects,—so intimately that the most learned scientific observers have been unable to discover the lines which separate them. Each class is composed of innumerable millions of individuals, different in rank and character from each other, and yet so marked that they can be arranged in groups gradually increasing in complexity and beauty of structure from the coarse, shapeless, primitive rock, up to crystal, more elegant and regular in form than some low vegetables which are connected in the same kingdom by numerous and evident bonds of relationship with the mighty monarchs of the forest, with the sensitive plant and the fly-catcher ; and these latter are apparently superior in every thing, except the peculiar faculty called animal life, to some individuals of the worm and reptile classes, which again have their undisputed place in the same kingdom with the highest orders of the brute creation, and with man himself. Beginning at the rock, and ascending to the man, there is a chain of many links, and not one link wanting. Linneus remarks truly that nature makes no leaps. She has gone forward step by step ; the successive footprints are recorded in indelible characters on the face of the universe. None of her productions are kinless ; all are as though they had grown from one seed, which bore in its own bosom the faculty of developing itself into higher, more numerous, and more complex forms every year.

The vegetables and animals are composed of elements which are to be found in the older kingdom. As its children, they have taken its substance. The carbon, the oxygen, the hydrogen, the nitrogen, which exist in mineral form, are also found in the plants, which dig into the earth for their support. The same materials compose the greater portion of the frames of the animals, which devour the plants or their plant-eating brothers, and both plants and animals, as a general rule, must every day have new support from air or water, or they die. The same general qualities mark the objects of the three kingdoms ; all have weight, extension, and inertia. The same natural forces appear to prevail through, and to support, as they are, the

three kingdoms. All are subject to similar mechanical and chemical influences ; all are influenced by heat, electricity, and concussion. It was supposed, for many ages, that animal life was owing to a peculiar power, or vital force, unknown in the other kingdoms, and radically different from all the forces which exercise an influence therein. But this theory is now rejected by all the ablest physiologists. They can find nothing to support it ; they find much to contradict it. Every process, every force discoverable in the animal frame has its kindred process or force, in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, in the chemist's laboratory, or the mechanic's workshop. The eye is a daguerreotyping establishment ; the heart is a pump which forces arterial blood to the extremities, and sucks back the venous blood ; the liver is an acid factory ; the stomach takes the liver acid to dissolve the food ; the brain is a galvanic battery which telegraphs thought and sensation along the wires of nervous fibre with a kind of electricity similar to that which New York uses in speaking to New Orleans ; and the muscles, when required to act, are filled with electro-magnetism, so that the ends may be drawn together, just as the opposite poles of a steel magnet would approach each other, if its material were not stubbornly inflexible.

§ 148. Among the various kinds of animals, man is one. His body is material, and it possesses the distinguishing feature of the animal kingdom—a nervous system. His frame bears a close resemblance to that of other animals. It is composed of the same elements, and is divided into the same organs with the same functions. Man has muscle and bone, skin and hair, feet and mouth, stomach and heart, senses, and blood, and brain ; and a dog has the same. And he is a pretty good chemist who will distinguish a slice of human muscle, or brain, or a drop of human blood from similar portions of the canine system. Men and brutes are alike produced by generation, supported by nourishing food placed in the stomach and by a constant supply of air ; and they die from similar causes, either mechanical or chemical violence, or the exhaustion by age of the life-sustaining power of their organs. The quadruped and the man have minds differing in power, but not differing substantially in kind. The brutes have reason, memory, and passion ; they are

evidently actuated in many of their movements by motives similar to those which govern men. When young, they are playful, and grave when old. Their countenances and actions at different times show plainly that the mind is filled with doubt, anger, revenge, fear, content, exultation, shame, joy, pride, love of frolic, and maternal love. They not only show these sentiments, but their characters are marked by the general predominance of certain mental impulses. They are "envious,* irascible, placable, [faithful, affectionate,] courageous, cowardly, vain, sober, haughty, humble, vindictive, generous, cunning, candid, [clever,] or stupid, just like human beings. According to the divisions laid down by phrenologists, they possess benevolence, self-esteem, cautiousness, love of approbation, hope, wonder, comparison, and many other of the faculties possessed by man. There is scarcely one of the ingredients of mind which is not bestowed upon them, and they have perversions of the faculties from disease like man. They [more particularly dogs, horses, swine, and kine] *go mad*, and the mother destroys her offspring† under the influence of puerperal insanity, as women do."

Brutes learn by experience, and that learning implies not only memory, but the faculty of reasoning by analogy. It is said that brutes and men are distinguished from each other in the possession of reason by the latter, and "instinct" by the former; but the probability is that both possess instinct and reason, differing only in the different degrees of development. That brutes reason is shown by multitude of facts recorded in every work on zoology: and that men have instinct is also a fact scarcely to be denied by those who will look at the evidence. A singular case is related by Carpenter in his work on *Human Physiology*, of an idiotic girl in Paris, who, having been delivered in solitude of a child, when found, actuated doubtless by the same instinctive impulse which guides the brute-mother, had gnawn off the umbilical cord of her offspring. Man's very

*WIGAN.—On the duality of the mind. Ch. XXVI.

† This offspring-murder is a frequent occurrence in the swine-raising counties of Ohio and Indiana. Sows which ordinarily show great affection for their young, when provided with an abundance of food of every kind, set upon their offspring and devour them.

great mental superiority in a state of civilization, and his evident superiority, even in the lowest state of barbarism, to the brute, is owing to a great extent to faculties which do not belong to the mind—to the hand capable of grasping, to the erect form which leaves the grasping hand at liberty, and to the tongue, throat-muscles, and ear which give him the faculty of communicating his thoughts. By the aid of these faculties he is capable of educating himself, and of rising to a greatness far beyond the condition in which he now is. Without these he would be as near to the chimpanzee as the latter is to some of the lower orders of monkeys.

Man belongs to a certain class of animals : he is placed by naturalists among the “mammalia”—that class which give birth to their young alive, and suckle them at the teat—that class which includes the ape, the elephant, the lion, the wolf, the mouse, the opossum, and the whale. The unscientific observer might say that nature had made a great leap from the disgusting brutishness and vile form of the ape to the beautiful and majestic body, and all-comprehending mind of a Goethe. But that vast distance was not made at one leap ; there are many steps between the two points. The infant and the idiot, connected by steps, infinitely small with the greatest philosopher, are inferior in intelligence to the ape : and Solly, a physiologist and author of high and undisputed merit, declared that there was a greater distance between the minds of a Newton and a common hewer of wood and drawer of water, than between the mind of the latter and that of a dog. But the idiots, children, and uneducated persons of the Caucasian family are not the only humans, nearly related to the brutes. The lowest tribes of savages connect* “with the beasts in the most unmistakeable manner by a multitude of the most striking resemblances. The long arms, the form of the foot, the thin calf, the long narrow hands, the general leanness, the projecting lower jaw, the low sloping forehead, the small head running far back, the short neck, the narrow pelvis, the prominent belly, the beardless chin, the dark skin, the abominable smell, the filthiness, the grimaces in speaking, and the sharp shrieking tones of the voice are

* BUECHNER, Kraft und Stoff.

so many marks of his near relationship to the ape." And through his kinship to the ape and the other mammalia, he is akin to the bird, and the fish, the snake, the shellfish, the bug, the worm, and the polypus. Indeed, physiologists say, that man is a member of different lower orders at different times—so far as can be distinguished by external signs. While in the progress of formation, previous to birth, the human brain takes first the form of the brain of a fish; then that of a reptile; next that of a bird, then that of a low-class mammal, and finally, after having gone through all those stages, after having, as it were, belonged to four inferior orders, it is developed one step farther, to humanity.

There is one more point in which the near relationship of man to the lower animals is clearly observable, and although the consideration of it is necessarily in itself disagreeable, yet it should be looked at, since this professes to be a treatise on a matter of science, and science knows no feelings of bashfulness or delicacy—much less of prudery and false modesty. There are many records in history of hybrids—half man, half brute. The human had crossed breed with the beast mammal; and the offspring bore witness that the parents were made of live flesh and blood. But mammal and bird cannot produce a hybrid, neither can bird and fish: there is not enough relationship between them. Man is nearer to the dog than the dog is to the bird—nearer than the bird is to the fish—nearer than the fish is to the mollusca.

§149. The animal frame, in all its parts, appears to us to be made with an evident adaptation to certain ends, so far as we know, and much study has been devoted to the subject, and progress made in accumulating and comparing facts; every particle of the human system has its use—its purpose. The frame is divided into parts which differ from each other in form and material, and each of these parts or organs has a different function. The bones serve to stiffen the frame and shield the most delicate and important of the vital organs; the muscles give mechanical force and the power of locomotion; the stomach manufactures from the food new material to mend the constant wear and tear of every part of the system: and the nerves of sense enable the body to perceive its relations to other bodies beyond itself. No

two organs have the same function : the heart cannot secrete bile ; the liver cannot pump blood through the arteries and veins ; the stomach cannot do the work of the kidneys. This division of the animal frame into various organs with different functions is almost infinite in many portions of the body, minute particles of flesh, invisible to the naked eye, have tasks to perform, different from those of other, equally minute particles at their side.

The most noteworthy of the larger divisions of the animal frame is the head. It is the exclusive seat of the majority of the senses—sight, hearing, taste, and smell—the special organs of which are among the most delicately organized parts of the body. The head is also a vital organ ; there is no method of taking life quicker than by wounding it. The largest portion of the head is the brain, a mass of matter with an exceedingly fine organization, surrounded and protected by a strong case of bone. The delicate material and guarded position of the encephalon and its vicinity, to the most sensible parts of the frame, would lead us, without knowing anything of its functions, but reasoning, according to the general analogies of nature, to believe that it is one of the most important organs—that it exercises some of the most important functions of the system : and physiologists assert that it is the organ of the mind, and as a necessary corollary in physiology that the mind is the function of the brain. We shall look at some of the evidence, on which they found their belief.

§ 150. The most important of all the animal faculties is the mind. By its means the animal is conscious and sensible, capable of feeling and thinking, capable of knowing the present, remembering the past and anticipating the future. Rank among brutes as among men, depends to a great extent upon it; and it is justly entitled to the elevated position in the brain and the strong protection of the skull. That faculty—mind—is the function of an organ, as all the other animal faculties are ; and although it differs in its nature from all the other animal functions, yet these again differ from each other : digestion, muscular power, sight, smell, feeling, and blood-pumping have as little resemblance to each other as they have to the mind, yet they are all animal faculties.

151. Observation has established the fact that certain relations exist in all cases between the organs and their respective functions: and where those relations are found to exist between a faculty and a part of the frame, it is presumed, unless there be evidence to the contrary that the former is the function of the latter. Thus it is a general rule of physiology that the function is dependent for its normal action on the healthy condition of its organs. If the stomach be disordered, it will not digest well. If the heart be pierced by a sword through the centre, it will be unable to send the blood through the system. If the muscles of the thigh be divided transversely, they cannot sustain the body. To injure the nerves of sight, smell, and hearing, is to injure those functions, themselves. And a similar relationship exists between the brain and the mind. When the former is diseased, the latter is disordered. The blow which wounds the brain, wounds the mind. Perhaps the injury to the function is imperceptible in some cases, but it is, in all probability, none the less real. When the brain is irritated by the presence of intoxicating liquor, the mind becomes drunk, loses the clearness of its perceptions and does things which it would never do, which it would shrink from with horror, while sober. If the skull be broken so that the finger can be pressed in upon the brain, the pressure will render the man unconscious and insensible, and while the pressure continues he has no more mind than a chicken with its head cut off. The experiment has been tried frequently and the same result was always found to follow. So too a pressure on the brain produced by other causes may produce unconsciousness. The bursting of a blood vessel in the brain causes apoplexy and sometimes death, by the pressure of the blood on the organ which is the true seat of life.

“We know* the simple fact that all the manifestations of mind depend on physical structure — that every change therein is accompanied by a greater or less change in the mind—that its qualities, its sentiments, its opinions, its affections, its belief, its propensities and its passions are permitted to be influenced, strengthened, weakened or perverted by disease in the physical structure of the system—that

* WIGAN.

a blow on the head shall entirely alter the moral character of the individual—that slight inflammations of its structure shall change modesty, reserve and devotion into blasphemy and obscenity—that a small spicula of bone from the internal surface of the skull, shall transform love into hatred—that other diseases shall make the sober-minded man vain and silly, turn the hero into the coward or the coward into the ferocious bully—shall make the tender mother destroy her own offspring, and the loving husband put to death the object of his long-tried affection.”

The mind is affected directly by the condition of the brain and not by that of any other organ. The loss of an arm or a leg, or of both arms and both legs, does not perceptibly injure the thinking faculty. Any part of the body below the chin may be seriously injured, without immediately affecting the mind. It is true that any obstruction in the flow of blood to the brain affects the mind, and a total stoppage causes a loss of consciousness, and death : but this fact affords no evidence against the theory that the brain is the organ of the mind. All the fleshy fibres of the animal's frame must have an uninterrupted and sufficient supply of good blood to enable them to act in a healthy manner : and if that supply be not furnished, the muscles, the stomach, the liver, and the kidneys will “strike” work as quickly as the brain.

§ 152. Another general rule, prevailing in the relations between organs and functions, is that the latter are strong in proportion to the size of the former. A large muscle is stronger than a small one : a large liver secretes more bile than a small one : a large stomach digests more food than a small one : and a very large olfactory nerve is usually considered indicative of a very acute sense of smell. The same rule prevails in the relationship between brain and mind. The fact may be perceived most readily by comparing different classes of animals. The long ladder of animal life, reaching, as it were, from heaven to earth, with thousands of rounds, beginning at man and running down step by step in the scale of physical development, gradually decreasing in beauty, strength and complexity of frame, and variety, vigor and grace of motion, is marked by an equal decrease in intellectual power and the amount of brain. Man is far

superior in intelligence to all the other animals, and his brain is absolute larger than that of any other except the elephant and whale : and it is also larger in proportion to the size of his frame than that of any other animal, with a few exceptions of the sparrow species ; and these exceptions are more apparent than real. The sparrow owes much of his relatively large brain to the full development of the sensory ganglia, that part of the brain which is the seat of sensation and consciousness, while the thinking part—the Cerebrum—is proportionately smaller than in man. The difference between the brain of the man and that of the dog, between the brain of the dog and that of the sheep, and between the sheep's brain and the tortoise's brain is as good a measure as we have of the respective difference between their mental capacities. The same rule may be observed among men. The brain of women is usually one tenth less than that of men, and their mental faculties may be that much weaker. Infants have small, soft brains, and very weak minds—at first scarcely minds at all—and as the brain grows large and solid, the mind grows in activity and strength. A very small brain is a certain sign of idiocy, and very great talent is always accompanied by a very large brain.

§ 153. A third general rule of the relationship between the functions and the organs is that those organs, whose functions are under the control of the will, must rest about one third or fourth of the time. The heart, the lungs, the liver, and some other organs not under the control of the will, can not be driven by the will to go faster, nor compelled to stop ; and they work, or can work, always without rest. But the muscles are under the control of the will, to a considerable extent at least ; and they must have rest six or eight hours out of the twenty-four. So the mind is under the control of the will liable to be driven to great exertion or over-exertion, and requiring also for the brains its share of rest every day.

§ 154. A fourth general rule is that in old age the organs lose their vigor and strength, and the functions suffer a similar decay. The general loss of physical power, the *decline* of life in men after the age of forty or forty-five, is a matter of universal observation. All the organs appear

to lose ; bones, muscles, stomach, liver, and the organs of secretion generally. The brain decreases in weight also, but not so much as the muscles ; and therefore the brain, according to the experiments of Solly, is, on an average, heavier in proportion to the body at sixty years of age than at forty-five. And as the brain decreases in solidity, so does it lose force. Notwithstanding the constant and valuable accumulation of knowledge and experience, there is probably no human mind so strong at sixty as it was at forty. The majority of great intellectual works have been planned and executed by men in the blossom or bloom of manhood. The memory of events begins to fail before forty, and continues to fail rapidly after that age. At sixty the mind ordinarily becomes perceptibly weak, and if a man lives to eighty without falling into decided dotage, he is considered fortunate. Shakspeare, in his *Seven Ages of Man*, makes second childhood the natural termination of human life, and the truthfulness of his picture has been admired throughout the civilized world.

§ 155 A fifth general rule is that the exercise of the function wears away the organ, and that the wear and tear is proportioned to the amount of the exercise. The muscles are worn out by physical labor ; the worn-out material is carried off through the pores of the skin and the kidneys. The chemist knowing the material of which the muscles are composed, and knowing approximately the amount of waste caused by great or little exertion, can, by examining the secretion of a man's kidney, and knowing the amount of time in which it was collected, may guess pretty near the truth at the amount of work done by him in that time. So, also, the exercise of the mind is always accompanied by a proportionate wear of the brain ; and the worn-out matter is carried off through the urine, where it may be distinguished and its amount discovered.

§ 156. The sixth relation to which I shall here call attention, prevailing between mind and brain, as well as between animal organs and their functions generally is, that over-exertion of the latter causes pain and disorder in the former. Pain in the muscles is the consequence of extreme trials of the physical strength ; pain in the eye follows undue exertion in the visual faculty ; pain in the stomach is

the result of overloading the digestion; and in a similar manner severe application of the mind causes pain in the head.

§ 157. A seventh general rule is, that, when a function is in active exercise, the organ demands a larger supply of blood than when at rest. This is true of the stomach, the liver, the kidneys, and the sexual organs. Its truth is confirmed by many facts within the knowledge of every observant man, and is recognised in all the works on physiology. The large supply of blood is necessary to carry off the greater-than-usual waste, and to meet the increased demand for new material. The rule extends also to the brain and the mind. When the latter is active, or excited, the blood flows through the encephalon with greater rapidity and force than when the mental faculties are at rest. Sir Astley Cooper observed and recorded a case of this kind in a youth, whose brain was laid bare; and the learned surgeon gave his students the sensible advice, that, in treating wounds of the brain, they should be careful to keep the mind quiet.

§ 158. Another general rule is that organs and functions are different in nature, the former being material, and the latter immaterial. The optic, the auditory, and the olfactory nerves, the stomach, the muscles, and the kidneys are material, and have qualities belonging only to matter, such as extension, weight, and color; and they are divisible into certain elementary substances, such as phosphorus, carbon, and so on; but their respective faculties,—sight, hearing, smell, digestion, physical strength, and secretion,—are immaterial, cannot be weighed, measured, or felt, nor be separated into substantial elements. Qualities of matter are in their nature immaterial; if they could cease to be immaterial, they would cease to be qualities. The strength of a stick, the length of a block, the weight of a stone are things immaterial in themselves, and they cease to exist when the matter on which they were dependent, takes a new form. A function in its very nature is a mere quality of matter,—the office, employment, or faculty of a material organ. Such is the definition of the word “function,” as given in our dictionaries, and we have no reason to deny its correctness. Like other organs and functions, the brain is material, and the mind is immaterial. The thinking faculty

no has never been discovered by the knife, the scales, or the microscope, and like all other faculties, it will forever remain undiscoverable, except through its actions. Great importance is often attached by theologians to the *immateriality* of the mind, as though that were the only immaterial power which man possesses, whereas, on the contrary, there can be power which is not immaterial. Mind has no peculiar superiority in this respect over a thousand other functions of the animal frame.

§ 159. The *immateriality* of thought is often spoken of as something without analogy in the animal economy ; but every act of an organ, or exercise of a function, is immaterial in the same manner. Thus, a movement of the arm, which is an exercise of the physical strength, as the function of that portion of the body, is immaterial, and, indeed, every motion, or action, from its very nature, must be so. Thought is an act of the mind, and like all other acts, can not exist as a substance, in and for itself.

§ 160 Physiology informs us not only that the mind is the function of the brain, but that different parts of the mind are the functions of different portions of the brain. The encephalon is composed chiefly of two divisions : the *Cerebrum* or upper part of the brain, and *Cerebellum* or lower and back part. Each of these parts has its peculiar mental function.

The Cerebellum is the seat of the power of governing the muscles in harmonious action. "We* find its degree of development corresponding pretty closely with the variety and energy of the muscular movements which are habitually executed by the species ; the organ being the largest in those animals which require the *combined* effort of a great variety of muscles to maintain their usual position, or to execute their ordinary movements ; whilst it is the smallest in those which require no muscular exertion for the one purpose, and little combination of different actions for the other. Thus in animals that habitually rest and move upon four legs, there is comparatively little occasion for any organ to combine and organize the actions of their several muscles ; and in these the Cerebellum is usually small. But among the more active of the predaceous fishes, (as the

* CARPENTER --Elements of Physiology.

shark,)—birds of the most powerful and varied flight, (as the swallow,)—and such mammals as can maintain the erect position, and can use their extremities for other purposes than support and motion—we find the Cerebellum of much greater size, relatively to the remainder of the encephalon. There is a marked advance in this respect, as we ascend through the series of quadrumanous animals ; from the baboons, which usually walk on all-fours, to the semi-erect apes, which often stand and move on their hind-legs only. The greatest development of the Cerebellum is found in man, who surpasses all other animals in the number and variety of the combinations of muscular movement, which his ordinary actions involve, as well as of those which he is capable, by practice, of learning to execute.

“ From experiments upon all classes of vertebrated animals, it has been found that, when the Cerebellum is removed, the power of walking, springing, flying, standing, or maintaining the equilibrium of the body, is destroyed. It does not seem that the animal has in any degree lost the *voluntary* power over its individual muscles ; but it can not *combine* their actions for any general movement of the body. The *reflex* movements, such as those of respiration, remain unimpaired. When an animal thus mutilated, is laid on its back, it can not recover its former posture ; but it moves its limbs, or flutters its wings, and evidently not in a state of stupor. When placed in the erect position, it staggers and falls like a drunken man—not, however, without making efforts to maintain its balance.

“ When the Cerebellum is affected with chronic disease, the motor function is seldom destroyed ; but the same kind of want of combining power shows itself, as when the organ has been purposely mutilated. Some kind of lesion of the motor function is invariably to be observed ; whilst the mental powers may or may not be affected—probably according to the influence of the disease in the Cerebellum upon other parts. The same absence of any direct connection with the psychical powers, is shown in the fact, that inflammation of the membranes covering it, if confined to the Cerebellum, does not produce delirium. Sudden effusions of blood into its substance may produce apoplexy or paralysis ; but this may occur as a consequence of effusions into

any part of the encephalon, and does not indicate, that the Cerebellum has any thing to do with the mental functions, or with the power of the will over the muscles."

§ 161. The Cerebrum is the seat of intelligence and memory. "The results † of the removal of the Cerebral Hemispheres, in animals to which the shock of the operation does not prove immediately fatal, must appear extraordinary to those who have been accustomed to regard these organs as the centre of all energy. Not only Reptiles, but Birds and Mammalia, if their physical wants be supplied, may survive the removal of the whole Cerebrum for weeks, or even months. If the entire mass be taken away at once, the operation is usually fatal ; but if it be removed by successive slices, the shock is less severe, and the depression it produces in the organic functions is soon recovered from. It is difficult to substantiate the existence of actual sensation, in animals thus circumstanced ; but their movements appear to be of a higher kind than those resulting from mere reflex action. Thus they will eat fruit when it is put into their mouths : although they do not go to seek it. One of the most remarkable phenomena of such beings, is their power of maintaining their equilibrium ; which could scarcely exist without consciousness. If a rabbit, thus mutilated, be laid upon its back, it rises again ; if pushed, it walks ; if a bird be thrown into the air, it flies ; if a frog be touched, it leaps. If violently aroused, the animal has all the manner of one waking from sleep ; and it manifests about the same degree of consciousness as a sleeping man, whose torpor is not too profound to prevent his suffering from an uneasy position, and who moves himself to amend it. In both cases, the movements are *consensual* only, and do not indicate any voluntary power ; and we may well believe that, in the former case as in the latter, though *felt*, they are not *remembered* ; an active state of the Cerebrum being essential to *memory*, though not to sensations, which simply excite certain actions."

It is supposed that consciousness, which is not destroyed by the removal of either the *Cerebrum*, or the *Cerebellum*, must reside in the *Sensory Ganglia*, which are masses of nervous matter at the base of the brain, in front of the *Me*

† CARPENTER.

dulla Oblongata ; but physiologists have not yet been able to obtain so much evidence to prove its connection with any special portion of the brain, as they have found in regard to intelligence and the power of movement. That consciousness has its seat in some part of the brain, is considered as conclusively established by the fact that pressure on the brain deprives the animal of that faculty.

§ 162. We have thus traced all the more important, general bonds of union between the animal organs and functions from the consideration of which we could hope for any light upon the relation between the brain and the mind ; and we have found that every analogy leads to the belief that the latter is a mere function of the former. The condition of the mind depends upon that of the brain ; the strength of the mind depends on the size of the brain ; the brain, like other organs, subject to the control of the will, must have rest a third or a fourth part of every day ; the mind decays with old age ; the brain is worn away by the exercise of the mind ; when the mind is excited, the brain requires an unusually large supply of blood ; and over-exertion of the mind causes pain in the head. All these facts furnish strong evidence of the immediate connection of the thinking power with the encephalic matter. Upon the theory that the mind is the function of the brain, we can explain all the mental operations as well, at least, as by any other means, while, if we adopt a contrary supposition, we become involved at once in a multitude of serious difficulties. Dreaming is explained very satisfactorily by supposing that part of the brain is asleep, and part in action ; and it cannot be explained at all, if the functional nature of the mind be denied : for dreaming is evidently a mental operation. The same remarks may be made of somnambulism, and cases of "double-consciousness." The phenomena of "unconscious cerebration," as Carpenter styles it, can be explained only on this theory. The most prominent of these facts is that the mind thinks unconsciously. Thus scholars frequently lay aside unfinished problems or dissertations for a few weeks, and in the mean time occupy themselves with other matter ; and when they return to their former labors, they find that their ideas are much clearer than while they were at work previously. The brain has been thinking on the

old train of ideas in the meantime, while the man has not been aware of any such operation.

Against all this evidence, no rebutting testimony of any scientific weight can be adduced, not a particle worthy of a moment's attention. The works of the natural philosophers may be sought through in the vain search for any such testimony. "No physiologist," says Carpenter, "could venture to deny, in the face of the crowd of facts, which force themselves on his attention, that all mental operations are inextricably linked with vital [material] changes in the nervous system."

§ 163. If the mind be a function of the brain, it follows as a matter of course, that it must expire with its organ. All functional activity and existence in the animal kingdom depend upon the animal life of the organs. When the eye is out, there is no sight ; when the auditory nerve is destroyed, there is no hearing ; when the muscles are cut to pieces, there is no physical strength ; when the liver is dead, there is no secretion of bile ; and we may safely say, that, when the brain dies, the mind dies with it, and dies forever. The grave is an eternal sleep.

§ 164. That a contrary doctrine prevails extensively among civilized nations, and that powerful religious interests and vulgar prejudices are interested in sustaining it, are facts known to all ; but nevertheless, before such contrary doctrine can obtain any scientific foundation, it must overthrow not only the analogies heretofore referred to, but also other analogies drawn from physiology, and the domain of nature.

§ 165. If the soul live after the death of the brain, it must exist either with, or without the body. In the former case, how should the body be recalled to life ? How should all its scattered particles be collected ? Suppose that the scene of a battle had been turned into a wheat-field, and that the matter which formed the blood, flesh, and bones of the soldiers, fills the heads of the grain, and thence is transformed into bread and into the systems of thousands of other men, who die with that matter in their bodies—to which man would the matter belong, the first, or the second owner ? And suppose there were a dozen owners ? The slaughter of Waterloo served to enrich not that field alone ;

the bones were carried across the channel, and the Englishman grew strong again on the remains of his brother. In cases of famine, in shipwrecks and sieges, where men have eaten human flesh, digested it, and shortly afterwards died—to whom would the flesh belong in the other life? When do the atoms collect? and where? What becomes of the body? Does it remain on earth imperceptible to mortal senses, or does it bid defiance to the laws of gravity, and fly off to another planet? Does it wander about naked, hungry, and shelterless, or is it furnished with food, clothing, and houseroom by some mysterious arrangements of Providence, intelligible only to the perspicacious minds of the elect? Do those who were infants, cripples, and men in second childhood, when physical death overtook them, become capable of moving about with ease? A thousand other questions, which should be answered, if we are to believe the existence of the mind in connection with the body in another life, might be asked, and never can be answered reasonably.

§ 166. But it may be said that the soul exists independently of the body, after death. If so, it must be such an “existence” as is now unknown to us. There are but two classes of “existences” known to philosophy and science—matter, and its qualities or conditions. Every existence belongs to one or the other of these classes. Time, eternity, space, forces, laws, and motions are the conditions and qualities of matter, without which they do not and can not exist. It was at one time supposed that heat, electricity, and light were “immaterial substances;” but it is now pretty well established that they are only peculiar oscillations or conditions of matter. If the mind exist after death independently of the body and brain, we must suppose it to be immaterial—that is a “thing” which is neither matter, nor a quality of matter, and which has no analogical relative in nature. It may be asserted that it has a related essence in God; but science and positive philosophy have never been able to discover God, much less to determine what his “essence” is: and the adoption of the wild suppositions of the theologians in opposition to the firmly established facts of science, would be much like philosophic suicide.

§ 167. Again, all known forces are qualities of matter. The mind is a force, and as such should likewise be a quality of matter. Scientific investigation has never discovered force, of any kind whatever, which existed of, for, and by itself. Every known force depends upon matter, and its strength is measured, as a general rule, by the amount of the matter in which it is generated. No force exists without matter, and no matter without force. Animal force, chemical force, and mechanical force are all alike in this respect ; all depend upon matter for their existence, and upon the amount of their matter for their strength ; and we have no evidence to justify the assertion that mental force forms an exception to the rule.

§ 168. Every thought in life is accompanied by a change in matter, and every action of any force implies such a change. Mind is a force, and exists, and manifests its existence only in thought. Now, what reason can we find for believing that it shall think and act in another life without those material changes which invariably accompany its thought and action here ? No such reason can be found in the domain of science.

• § 169. The existence of mind necessarily implies animal life. We never have seen, or in any way perceived a thinking being, which was not an animal, possessed of a material body and a nervous system, and subject to that peculiar kind of combustion, which we call animal life ; nor have we any scientific evidence, any clear philosophic evidence, any evidence at all, to justify us in supposing that a mind can exist without animal life, or that there is any other kind of animal life than that recognized in our physiologies.

• § 170. Man, during mortal life, can not think without brain. Shall it be different after death ? Shall the dissolution of the body set the function free as from a prison ? What virtue is there in death to release the mind from dependence for its sanity on the health, for its strength on the size, and for its existence on the animal organization and activity of the encephalon ? Shall the man possess memory and intelligence beyond the grave without Cerebrum, and consciousness without Sensory Ganglia ? Shall he see without eyes at all, when a mere bandage, over them here, makes him blind ? Shall he hear without ears, smell without nose,

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move without muscles, and talk without tongue? Or shall he live in utter darkness, loneliness, and quietude, unable to communicate with any thing beyond himself, and sit forever thinking of nothing? Shall the passions which are portions of the mind here, and which act only to demand gratification for physical wants,—shall they be active without reference to a material body? Shall the faculties which are necessary in earthly struggles, find a new sphere of action in the field beyond the Styx? Do the other animal functions, as well as the mind, exist independently of their organs? Do they journey together to the Elysian Fields? Do they, which were here united by the bonds of a material body, preserve their partnership there, or do they separate, and each go prowling about, seeking whom it may devour? Have the souls of brutes admittance to the human heaven? Are the apes admitted into genteel society? Do the defunct pursue the same occupations, are they governed by the same tastes as when in mortal life? Does the sainted cat chase, and tear, and torture the sainted mouse? Does the dog still worship the man, or is new light furnished in the higher spheres, so that he sees the imperfections of the featherless biped, and the folly of canimorphism? Are the sublimated souls dependent for their happiness upon mental occupation, and what is the subject of their thoughts and studies? Do they love and hate, fear and hope? Do they read the morning papers, and worship tailors? Alas! tell me, how do they live, ye who know so much of their existence!

§ 171. But if the soul be immortal, is it not rather singular that the immortality had a beginning? Would not such an immortality be somewhat like an eternity with one end cut off? And surely, nobody will assert that he lived in his present selfhood, before he was begotten by his parents in the flesh. And without his present selfhood, *he* could not have existed before. He was not himself, if, previous to his life, he had an existence, of which he now knows nothing.

§ 172. Some authors, particularly physiologists, who have seen the utter impossibility of denying the absolute dependence of the intellectual powers on the brain * have

* WIGAN, GARTH WILKINSON, and others.

argued that the mind and the soul are distinct, and that the latter is immortal, while the former dies with the body. They have, however, failed to tell us what the soul, as they conceive it, is ; they have failed to tell us whether it manifests itself in this life,—whether there is any proof of its existence ; they have failed to tell us, whether it can think, and remember, see, hear, and feel ; they have failed to tell us the proof that its powers and qualities, and the manners of its action are such as they think. This whole theory of the possession of a soul by man, independent of both mind and body, is too absurd to deserve an argument. It is the last turn of the doomed hare of immortality.

§ 173. The evidences which the theologians advance as proof of the future life, are man's desire for immortality, his curiosity to know the cause and end of his existence, his conceptions of perfection—implying the existence of such perfection—his tendency to connect himself with a personal deity, and an invisible world, and the necessity of a future life in which divine justice, whose requirements are not observed in this, shall be vindicated in rewards and punishments. As to the longing for immortality, I deny that there is any feeling in the human mind, except as the creature of superstition. Many nations have existed for centuries without the belief of another life ; and many of the present day have no expectation that their thinking powers will continue to exist after the death of the Cerebrum. Man has naturally no such longing ; his greatest longings are for happiness and sympathy on earth, and in those cases at least he generally finds that his longings do not furnish proof that they will be gratified. Man longs for pleasure, but he does not get it here ; why should he believe that he will get it elsewhere ? If longing may serve for proof of another life, it may prove also the conditions of that life, and one of the first conditions would be infinite and endless joy for all. The Christians may assert that this longing takes such a shape in their minds that they are certain—by an inward consciousness—that they will live forever. But this assertion is belied by their whole conduct ; they fear death as the king of terrors, and they can have little faith in another life, or they could not be so selfish, mean, and tyrannical to their weaker brethren, as they

are. If man had a longing for immortality, it would be as good proof for immortality in this life as in another.

We may conceive of a future state which might be the scene of endless pleasure and joy, intense beyond our present capacities and conceptions, indeed perfect, and if there were a possibility of our attaining such a condition we could not but hope for it, and look forward to it as an abundant recompense for the temporary sufferings of this life. The poet says that,

“If, as holiest men have deemed, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore ;
How sweet it were in concert to adore
With those who made our mortal labors light! .
To hear each voice we feared to hear no more!
Behold each mighty shade revealed to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian, sage, and all who taught the right!”

Sweet indeed it would be ; but if as most Christian men have deemed, nine-tenths of the human race go to hell, how bitter 't would be to find one's self there ! And perhaps it were not entirely sweet to find one's-self in heaven, and to discover that all one's dearest relatives and friends, and the greatest benefactors of the human race, were broiling in the fiery furnace below, in full sight of their writhings and in full hearing of their groans !

Curiosity for a knowledge of the causes and ends of existence can scarcely serve as evidence of a future life—especially while men are making so much progress as at present in this life in gratifying that curiosity.

But it is said that divine justice is not satisfied in this world, and a future life with rewards and punishments is necessary for the settlement of the accounts of good and evil, run up by man while in the flesh. I shall elsewhere attempt to prove that there is no personal divinity, as this argument would assume, and that, if there were, man's actions could be directly traceable to him, and therefore not punishable by him. If there be any assumption at all that justice must be done, the reasonable presumption is that the doing must take place where the evil is committed—and the assumption that justice will be done in another life, merely because it is not done in this, is most unreasonable.

"Are * there any marks of a distributive justice in the world? If you answer in the affirmative I conclude that, since justice here exerts itself, it is satisfied. If you reply in the negative, I conclude that you have then no reason to ascribe justice in our sense of it to the Gods. If you hold a medium between affirmation and negation, by saying that the justice of the Gods at present exerts itself in part, but not in its full extent, I answer that you have no reason to give it any particular extent, but only so far as you see it at present exert itself."

We have thus looked at all the testimony, worthy of note, for and against the dogma of the soul's immortality. That the evidence is all on the negative side, must, I think, be clear to every one. In the chapter on the *Natural History of the Biblical Doctrines* I have endeavored to show how the dogma arose and was sustained: and the history of physiology will contain the record of its fall. It was a bold and wonderful conception, and has served as a keystone for all the great creeds manufactured in the last twenty centuries, but mankind shall soon see the day when it will be reckoned among the cast-off garments, which the human soul has outgrown and found to be no longer wearable.

* Hama.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PANTHEISM VS. ANTHROPOMORPHISM

" All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is and God the soul ;
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze
Glow in the stars and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent."—POPE.

§ 174. The Bible indirectly asserts, or is said to assert, the existence of an anthropomorphic deity called Jehovah, who is personal, conscious, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, self-existent, and independent of all other existence—who has or is a mind with thoughts and feelings similar to those of mankind—who created the material universe out of nothing by an act of his volition, and who now governs it by his will.

The belief in some anthropomorphic deity or deities, more or less similar to the Christian conception of Jehovah prevails, and for many ages has prevailed, among the greater portion of the human race. I deny the existence of such an anthropomorphism, and shall endeavor to show that belief in it is contradicted by many well-known principles of philosophy and science, and that its alleged evidences are mere assumptions.

§ 175. The *first* assumption of the anthropomorphists is, that because the mechanism of a watch proves that it was constructed by an intelligent personal maker, therefore, the much more wonderful mechanism of the universe and its various parts, proves that it was made by an intelligent personal divine creator. This assumption is the great, and it may be said, the only evidence which the Christian theologians have of the existence of their personal deity. Paley's *Natural Theology*, which is the best work on the anthropomorphic side of the question, is occupied almost exclusively with this assumption.

The argument from design, as proof of a personal designer, implies that we see a necessary connection between

cause and effect, whereas it is a well-known philosophic principle that we can see no such necessary connection.* We can discover only that one natural phenomenon is invariably followed by another; and we call the former "cause" and the latter "effect." We can discover only the sequence, not the absolute necessity of it. We may discover intermediate causes, and when we do so, we find in them the "why" of natural phenomena, but as for the relation between the cause and its immediate effect we are as blind as ever so far as necessary connection is concerned. If we see something new we can not have any knowledge of its qualities or effects by mere *a priori* reasoning; and the only means we have of obtaining such knowledge is by arguing from the qualities and effects of other substances to which the new thing appears to bear an analogy. If we have never seen anything to which it is in any way analogous, then we can have no knowledge of its qualities or effects, until we have learned them by experiment.

Now let us apply this principle to the assumption under consideration. We argue from the watch to the human maker, because we have often seen men, we know that they work according to certain rules which we call design, and we are familiar with their works. But if we argue that Gods work according to similar rules, we make an assumption which has no warrant in philosophy. No man has ever seen, or in any way perceived a God, or any work known to proceed from the hand of a God. To assert that Gods work according to design as man do, is indeed to assume the whole question at issue—whether there be a personal God. The apparent design in nature is admitted by all pantheists, but they assert that so far as we know the design exists only in our minds. We perceive a harmony between the processes of our thoughts and the processes of nature, and forgetting that we are products of nature, we measure her by ourselves. "Man designs, nature † is;" "the adaptation of means to ends," says Kant, "was brought into the world by man's reflection, which

* This principle is admitted by the anthropomorphists. See BROUGHAM'S Natural Theology, Note III. There has been no attempt to refute Hume's great argument on the subject.

† H. G. ATKINSON. Man's Nature and Development.

was then astonished at the wonders itself had created." Design implies the use of means for the attainment of ends ; whereas we must suppose that an omnipotent and perfect being (if we are to argue about his existence and nature on assumptions from our own constitution as the anthropomorphists insist) would attain his ends without the use of means—that in fact his thought of the end, and the desire of its attainment would be its attainment.

But if the adaptation of means to ends be so apparent in the universe, what is the end of its creation ? We can not judge that the adaptation of means is good unless we know the end in view. So far as I know, God is represented by theologians as having only one purpose in the creation of the universe, and that is his own glory. Jonathan Edwards expresses part of the Christian doctrine when he says that Jehovah "glorifies himself in the damnation of the ungodly men."* The Bible says (*Prov. XVI, 4*), "The Lord hath made all things for himself—yea even the wicked for his glory." On this doctrine John Adams † comments thus : "He created this speck of dirt and the human species for his glory ; and with the deliberate design of making nine-tenths of our species miserable forever for his glory. This is the doctrine of Christian theologians, in general ten to one. Now, my friend, can prophecies or miracles convince you or me that infinite benevolence, wisdom or power, created and preserves for a time innumerable millions to make them miserable for ever for his own glory ? Wretch ! What is his glory ? Is he ambitious ? Does he want promotion ? Is he vain, tickled with adulation, exalting and triumphing in his power and the sweetness of his vengeance ?" Perhaps the Christians will say that their opinions are misrepresented here ; but where shall we find them represented truly ? If they pretend to find in the universe a wonderful adaptation of means to ends, they must tell what the great end is. Will they confess that any end, which they can imagine, implies an absurdity ? Does their creator intend to furnish them with proof of his

* Sermon entitled "The Torments of the wicked in Hell no occasion of grief to the Saints in Heaven."

† Letter to Jefferson, Sept. 14 1813

existence and nature in his works, and yet leave no purpose perceptible in creation ?

§176. The *second* assumption is, that the forces inherent in matter, inseparable from it, and generated by it, can not suffice to explain all the phenomena of nature. This assumption is not only wanting in every kind of evidence to support it, but it is in direct contradiction to the whole teachings of natural philosophy. Science is "the region * of universal law." She asserts that the law reigns throughout the universe, that every natural phenomena occurs under a law, as the effect of a sufficient natural cause, and she denies most emphatically the existence of any force, which is not inherent in matter. Science recognises no supernatural force, and wherever she has seen the superstition of the supernatural entrench itself in a stronghold, she has laid siege at once, and has succeeded in blowing it up, or, at least, she maintains a rigorous blockade, varied with occasional fierce assaults, which can not fail to be successful at last. She was told that every natural occurrence is the immediate act of a supernatural anthropomorphism, and she proved the assertion false in a vast number of instances. She was told that there are no forces inherent in matter, and she proved the assertion false. She was told that there are no natural laws, and she proved that there are such laws. She was told that rain falls, because Jove wills it, and she proved that rain falls, because vapor is condensed in the air. She was told that Jehovah made the rainbow by an immediate act of his will ; she proved that the rainbow is the necessary result of the qualities of light and water. She was told that the earth was fashioned in its present shape by the hand of Elohim ; she proved that it had grown to its present shape without help from any hand. She was told that the power of an omnipotent anthropomorphism was shown in the government of the motions of the heavenly bodies ; she proved that those motions are governed by the power of gravitation. She was told that God made the universe as it is ; she proved that the universe had whirled itself into shape. She was told that the present animal and vegetable kingdoms were commenced

and turned out complete in one day from the workshop of Elohim ; she proved that they attained their present position by growth, from lower conditions, as gradual as the development of the man from the child. She was told that God made man a living soul, and breathed into him the breath of life, and she proved that there is no force or power in man which is not the necessary result of his material organization ; that there is nothing in his material organization which does not belong to the mineral kingdom, and that in his growth there is no evidence of any supernatural power, or of any power, except such as is inherent in matter. Supernaturalism has seen ten thousand of her strongholds destroyed, while she has never gained the smallest victory ; and she has no reason whatever to hope that the future will be more favorable to her than the past. Wherever superstition has asserted that it saw the hand of a personal God, there science has shown that the hand of God was not, and that the hand of the natural law was. She has proved that force is inherent in all matter, and inseparable from it ; indeed, that matter is conceivable and discoverable only by its conditions, qualities, and forces. She traces force above force, and law above law, following up the chain of causes through thousands of links ; but instead of discovering, or even approaching an anthropomorphic deity, she removes further from the conception of him every year, until it has become proverbial, that of three natural philosophers, it may be safely assumed that two are atheists—that is, unbelievers in anthropomorphism. Natural philosophy spoke her opinion truly through La Grange, when he asserted : “ I have searched through the universe for a God, but in vain.” Science believes in, and worships no God, save the natural forces, and the universal law. She has sworn eternal and unrelenting hostility to all sects which do not bow to her divinity, and she is now engaged in a successful war of extermination against all forms of supernaturalistic superstition. She asserts that every natural phenomenon is the effect of a natural cause ; and although she is not able in many cases to tell what that cause is, or, if she know the cause, to explain its mode of operation, she can at least appeal for the truth of her assertion to the corroborative testimony of a thousand analogies, knowing well

that the supernaturalists can produce no evidence, either direct or indirect, in support of their theories.

§ 177. The *third* assumption of the anthropomorphists is that the dominion of universal natural law, and a personal governor of the universe, are compatible with each other. If there be universal and invariable natural laws, as science says there are, then they govern all natural phenomena, and there is no room for the influence of a deity. If these laws have prevailed throughout matter since the origin of the universe, then the divine anthropomorphism can do nothing except, perhaps, wind up the great machine like an eight-day clock. If these laws are eternal, as science says they are, then he could wind his clock but once. The employment of natural laws and forces implies finitude in the creator, if there be one. Man uses secondary means, because he has not the power to do all his work directly ; and if we are to argue from human analogies to the existence of a God, we must suppose, that, when he uses laws and forces as his agents, he does so because he finds them necessary as aids in the management of an extensive and complicated establishment.

§ 178. The *fourth* assumption is that the universe and the different classes of natural objects, more particularly living beings, *must* owe their original *creation* to a designing personality. Most of those who make this assumption admit that all the present phenomena of nature occur by the influence of natural forces under natural laws, but they say that the blind forces could never have produced thinking beings. It is upon "thinking beings," animals, &c., that the anthropomorphists now specially rely, for it has been pretty well established that all the changes and conditions in the mineral kingdom can be entirely accounted for by the principles of science. They argue that the cause must be greater than the effect, that the cause must contain the effect within itself : and they assert that the forces of dead matter do not comprise consciousness, sensation, thought and wisdom. But this last assertion is not justified by facts. We have no reason to assume that our consciousness is greater than the forces which pervade the rocks and seas and clouds. Suppose we take a fresh egg and examine it. There is nothing in it but such elements as are known

to chemistry—but such elements as are found in earth water and air : and these elements have no power or qualities except such as they would have in the mineral condition. The egg has neither sensation nor consciousness. It is as dead as the pebble from the seashore or the rain-drop from heaven. We place that egg in a warm place, where it is subjected only to natural influences, without the interference of any supernatural power, and a chick is produced which has sensation, consciousness and thought. It follows that the natural forces in the egg with the aid of external heat must have been greater than consciousness and sensation. Now man is only a chicken of higher development : his sensation, consciousness and thought are not radically different from those of the feathered biped ; and we can trace his generation as we can that of the chick. Every portion of his system is mineral, and his mineral elements possess none save natural forces—operating differently indeed from any process in the mineral kingdom, because the arrangement of the particles is different. But the pantheistic evidence does not stop here. It is not only probable that there are no supernatural forces in man because we can discover none, but it is as good as proved that those manifestations of thought, supposed to be superior to the blind forces of nature, are traceable directly to the latter as their cause. Electricity is evolved in thinking, and every thought is accompanied by a change of matter, such as accompanies, and indeed necessarily causes electrical action. The brain is a galvanic battery and the mind is its peculiar power. Thought is not greater than the flash of lightning in the sky : they are different developments of the same force. It may be considered a scientific certainty that gravity, electricity, magnetism, galvanism, affinity and the mental power are only different modes of action of the same natural force*, which pervades all matter, is inherent in it, inseparable from it, coëxistent with it from all eternity and to all eternity, and the only cause of all natural phenomena. It produces crystals, dew drops, turnips and chicks to-day from rude matter ; and we know that it might have given shape to the globe and to the uni-

* CARPENTER. *Hum. Phys.* § 120.—GROVE. *Correlation of the Physical Forces.*

verse, as we are well satisfied that it did, though we were not eye-witnesses of the process. We have no reason whatever to assume that the matter which exists now, was once non-existent, that the forces, which pervade it now did not always pervade it, or that the causes, which now suffice to produce all the changes in nature, did not always suffice.

§ 179. The *fifth* assumption is that when the chain of causes arrives at a God, it must stop there. If we are to reason from the phenomena of nature, according to the analogies of human works, until we arrive at a divine anthropomorphism, must we not go on and argue that that divinity is the effect of a greater one? If man must have had a personal creator because the watch had one, will not the same argument prove that the creator of man must have had a creator likewise and so on in an endless chain? And if we assume that gods are like men in working according to design, may we not also assume that, like men, they propagate their species? What is there in our *knowledge* of the divine essence and nature to justify us in asserting that Gods are this and are not that? To assert that a God is perfect and therefore self-existent, and necessarily without parentage, is to assume that our imperfect minds can appreciate perfection in works; for unless the works be perfect we have no right to assume that the workman is. If we are consistent, after adopting the belief in a God, we must admit that he is only the descendant of an endless line of creators or progenitors.

§ 180. The *sixth* assumption is that there is only one author of natural phenomena. The anthropomorphists say that the harmony of nature is proof that everything was created by one divinity. But when they assert that nature is harmonious, they assert what is notoriously false. Nature is not harmonious. The whole universe appears to be the scene of an endless strife. Evil pervades every part of the earth. Wherever there is sensation, there is pain. Hostile feelings and hostile interests wage fierce and grievous war with each other not only in the bosoms of individual men, and between societies of men, but also among the brutes. The land, the sea, and the air are full of strife and torture and murderous death. An endless cry of woe is heard throughout all nature. One half of the animal crea-

tion is made so that it is compelled to murder the other half,—so that its pleasure consists in the sight of the torture of the other half. The history of humanity is a continuous picture of crime and suffering, and a correct description of the nations of the earth as they now are, would show, that one third of the human race obtain most of what they consider their comforts and pleasures by robbing and rendering miserable the other two-thirds. When I look at the record of the tyranny, the slavery, persecution, and superstitions which have prevailed among men, am I to find in them the evidences of the glorious harmony of nature, proofs of the goodness and infinite love of the author of the universe?

That the structure of the sound eye is wonderfully curious, and apparently adapted with skill far beyond that of man, to a purpose, I admit; but what shall I say of the eye which is blind? Does that exhibit design? If design be evident in healthy and intelligent adult men, where is the design in disease? Where is the design in that arrangement of nature by which a large proportion of the children born die before arriving at physical or mental maturity? Where is the design in abortions? Where is the design in the constitution of those women who are keenly susceptible to the attractions of love, but who are so formed that maternity is certain death to them? Who is it that shall set forth the wisdom and excellence of idiocy, malformation and insanity? If the various qualities, powers and beauty of the tender infant, the lovely girl, the ambitious youth, the loving mother, the great and good man demonstrate the existence of a perfectly wise and good God as their creator, what shall we think of the earthquake of Lisbon in 1755, destroying 20,000 such men, women and children at one blow. Did the joy and smiles which filled the city one hour before the event come from the same God who made the misery, excruciating torture and dying groans which followed? If so, the anthropomorphists must abandon their human analogies for once at least.

As the theologians argue from certain natural phenomena, according to human analogies, until they arrive at a personal deity, we may with as much reason argue from other natural phenomena of an entirely different nature, according to the same analogies, until we arrive at a differ-

ent deity. If love and peace, wisdom and healthy animal organization are the proofs of a good god, why are not war, and hate, animal disease, and malformation, the proofs of an evil god? When we see a large and elegant steamship, and are told that it and all its parts came originally from England, we infer that coal-miners, iron-miners, iron-founders, iron-forgers, lumbermen, sawyers, ship-carpenters, joiners, cabinet-makers, blacksmiths, painters, glass-makers, brass-founders, and a thousand other species of mechanics, who, as we know, aid in the construction and furnishing of steamships, must live there. Now, here is this universe, composed of parts, infinitely more varied and wonderful, and why shall we believe that it was made by one mechanic? When we examine the steamship carefully, and find that one portion of the joiner-work is done very well, and another very poorly, we say that different mechanics were at work here: one of them was a good workman, and another was not so good. If, after we had looked through this steamship, a person should tell us that it had been built by one man alone, and that his only reason for the assertion was the evident harmony of all its parts—that harmony implying the agency of but one mind—who would believe him? Would any sane man believe that the same mechanic had cut the trees, dug the coal, and smelted the iron ore? And yet men like ourselves, assert most positively, reasoning as they pretend from human analogies, and knowing nothing more than they can learn by such reasoning, that the same anthropomorphism makes the still-born and the live-born child, the healthy and the sick man, the well-formed man and the cripple, the philanthropist and the professional murderer, the master and the slave, the cat and the mouse, the wheat-field and the cholera, the quadruped, the bird, the fish, the snake, the shell-fish, the insect, the tree, the shrub, the sea-weed, the air, the water, the crystal, the aqueous and igneous rocks, the earth, the sun, the moon, and all the planets, stars, and comets. If we argue from the various phenomena of nature to their creation by mind, we should believe *that* mind to be in a vast number of beings, very different from each other in moral and intellectual character.

§ 181. The *seventh* assumption is that matter exists ab-

solutely, and independently of our minds, whereas it will hereafter be shown that we have no evidence of any such fact. We *think* that we perceive matter, but in reality we perceive only a thought of matter ; and whether the matter conceived by the thought really exists, or whether the matter be such as we perceive it, are questions for which we can obtain no solution. But unless it be proved that matter exist absolutely, how are we to argue from it to the absolute existence of its creator ? If the matter exists only in our perception then God must exist there too, and he is no more than the hallucination which passes through the brain of a madman.

§ 182. The *eighth* assumption is that truth exists independently of man, and is discoverable by him. But we know that there is no truth except in the harmony of a proposition with our modes of thought. There is no truth in any proposition taken by itself. Then it follows that truth is merely a relative matter,—the creation, it may be said, of our own minds,—and God is reduced to a rank beneath ourselves. We make him, and then try to prove that he made us. He is at best a merely relative existence,—first me, then God. The nature of the existence of matter and truth will be considered further in a subsequent chapter.

§ 183. The *ninth* assumption is that infinity and personality may coexist in the same being. “ You give,” says Fichte, “ personality and consciousness to your God. What do you mean by ‘ personality ’ and ‘ consciousness ? ’ certainly such qualities as you have found in yourselves, and marked with these names. But that they necessarily imply limitation and finite condition in their possessor, must appear clear to you, if you pay the least attention to the nature of the ideas attached to them. By making God conscious and personal, you make him finite and like yourselves, and you have not thought a God, as you intended, but only an image of yourselves.” “ We feel and know ourselves to be persons,” adds Strauss,* “ only as distinct from other similar persons outside of us, from whom we are separated as finite beings. Formed in and for this domain of finitude only, the word ‘ personality ’ loses every

* Christliche Glaubenslehre, § 33.

meaning beyond it. A being which has no other like it beyond itself, can not be a person. To speak of a personal divinity or a divine personality, appears from this point of view as a connection of ideas which exclude and annihilate each other. Personality is a self-hood fenced in against outsiders; absoluteness, on the contrary, is the comprehensive, unlimited, infinite, which excludes all personality."

§ 184. The *tenth* assumption is that creation is consistent with perfection and infinity. Creation implies that God felt a want, that he changed his purpose, that his mind became subject to the influence of new ideas, that at a particular moment he felt the necessity of doing what he had never done before—in short that he was not perfect.

§ 185. The *eleventh* assumption is that a personal divinity exists in some place while we can prove that he does not exist in any place within our reach. Here is a lump of coal. Will any of the anthromorphists assert that their divinity resides in it? If they will, I can prove the falsity of their assertion by scientific means. I can crush and burn, and weigh and examine and analyse it in a thousand different processes, but can find no mark of a personal or conscious God residing in it. Since personality and consciousness, as men understand the words, are always discoverable by certain signs not to be found in the coal, I conclude that no personal and conscious being resides in it. And I can go through all the earth in the same way, proving that the anthropomorphic God is not there. Where is he then? When I can prove that he is not in anything on earth, shall I believe, without direct or indirect evidence of the fact, that he is in some other portion of the universe? Why should he not be here as much as elsewhere? Shall I imagine that he dwells elsewhere, merely because I can prove that he does not dwell here?

§ 186. The *twelfth* assumption of the anthromorphists is that we can believe in their personal deity, independent of matter, consistently with the analogies of nature, consistently with the facts that we do not *know* of any existence save that of matter and its dependent qualities, that we *know* of no force which is not generated in matter, that we *know* of nothing which possesses life without material organization, that we *know* of nothing which possesses mind

without a material nervous system, that we *know* of nothing which can think without a change of matter, and that we *know* of nothing which can see and hear without eyes and ears.

§ 187. Such are the assumptions on which the anthromorphist founds his faith, and with which he proves it; and most of them are absolutely necessary to his system. Other testimony he has none. The pantheist on the other hand makes no assumptions, but is ready to furnish sound and incontrovertible evidence for every principle which he advances.

§ 188. He says that matter and its properties or conditions are the only existences; that they have ever existed and will for ever exist, that the principal of these properties are forces which pervade every portion of the universe; that these forces are inherent in matter, inseparable from it, portion of its essence, and that they have given to it its present shape; that they govern it and produce all the phenomena of nature; that they act according to universal and invariable laws; that they are the soul of the universe; and that they arrive at consciousness only in the animal kingdom. They are the authors of all that is. They hold the stars in their places, swing the planets in their orbits and lead the solar system in its course through the universe. They create light and heat in the sun; they give life and motion to the earth; they lighten and thunder in the storm; they blow in the breezes; they keep the waters from stagnation; they rush madly over the precipice in the waterfall and burst from the bosom of the earth in the fires of the volcano; they roar in the torrent and murmur in the brook; they collect particles of carbon and crystallize them into the diamond; they embody themselves in the grand forms of the monster cypress, and pine tree of the Sierra Nevada; they show their capabilities of color and perfume in the flowers of the meadow; they give sensation to the worm, industry to the ant, intelligence to the bird and quadruped, masculine energy to the man, beauty to the woman, wisdom to the sage, eloquence to the orator, sublimity to the poet, and love to all the conscious beings of nature. They are the speed of the hare, the grace of the gazelle, the strength of the lion, the faithfulness of the dog, the courage of the

warrior, the devotion of the martyr, the light of the day, and the darkness of the night. They rejoice in the beautiful harvest, the warm sunshine, the refreshing breeze ; they rage in the battles, plagues, floods, and famines. They are the soul of all that is, of all that has been, of all that will be. Beyond them, there is nothing. They are subject to no dominion ; all existence is subject to them. They demand no worship ; they are deaf to all prayer ; they will be appeased by no sacrifice. They teach man to live for this life alone, and to recognize no duty except toward himself, or his fellowmen. They inspired their worshipper, when he wrote :

“ Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ; 't is her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy ; for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings.” *

* WORDSWORTH. Poem on Revisiting Tintern Abbey.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY.

"The strongest motive always governs."

§ 189. "Sin" is defined to mean a violation of a law prescribed by an anthropomorphic God, as "vice" is the violation of moral law, and "crime" a violation of criminal law. Christian philosophers assert that sin includes all kinds of vice ; and they assert also that all sins will be punished by everlasting pains in hell, unless they are excused according to Paul's platform. On the other hand I say, that, if there were such an anthropomorphic divinity, which I deny, he could not in justice punish man for any of his actions. Men have a right to inflict pain as a preventive of crime ; but they have no right to inflict it for any other purpose. And the punishments, which they inflict, are very different in principle and effect from a hell, which, if it exists, being unseen, can not exercise its proper influence in preventing violations of the laws, and necessarily takes the character of a place where God gratifies his vengeance rather than vindicates his justice.

§ 190. Every man has a character of his own—a mental constitution, distinct, peculiar, and different from that of all other men. No two are precisely alike. Men born and bred together, under the same circumstances, are different from each other : one is brave, another cowardly ; one is talented, another stupid ; one is magnanimous, another mean. Their mental constitutions differ. The grand fact is that they have peculiar mental constitutions,—individual characters. Now, whence came those constitutions ? Did each man make his own mind ? Was it given to him by any person, for whose acts he is responsible ? Or was it not born with him ? Does it not depend for its nature and powers upon the brain ? That personal character has great influence on a man's actions, no one will deny. A cowardly man does cowardly acts ; a brave man does brave acts ; a good man

does good, a mean man commits base actions. Men are not mean, brave, generous, etc., because they perform mean, brave, and generous actions ; but these actions are the consequences, the effect, the expression of a positive character : and that character does not change with the actions, but remains substantially the same through life. A cowardly man may, under the influence of an extraordinary impulse, perform a brave action, but that does not make him brave ; his character remains the same as it was before. A man's actions are influenced not by his character only, but also by external circumstances. Thus, if A. enter a crowd, and begin to strike right and left, B., who is a coward, will run, and C., who is brave, will stand and resist. No human action can be imagined which is not governed entirely and alone by personal character and external circumstances. But both these are beyond the control of the individual. A man can not become more or less brave, wise, generous, firm, prudent than he is. Among the many human inventions, there is none for altering a man's mental constitution. There is no imaginable process of hoping, praying, willing, or striving of any value for such a purpose. A man may change his position, but he can not change external circumstances. He may keep company with good, or bad men, but he can not, by a mere effort of mind, make them different from what they are. How then, since his actions are governed entirely by his character, and by external circumstances, both of them beyond his own control, how is he to be held responsible for those actions by a being who made the character and the circumstances ? But suppose that an exceptional case be found where an apparent change has taken place in a man's character,—that change must have been caused to a great extent by external circumstances, aided by forces existing in his own mind, which bore within itself the power to alter its mode of action ; and therefore, the change is not in itself a matter of merit or demerit.

Man is the slave of motives. He never acts without motive ; the very meaning of the word " motive " implies impulse to action. He must act with motives, and he can not act contrary to them. But a man's motives are not under his control. I have a hunger-impulse, a hate-impulse, a love-impulse, and other impulses which furnish the mo-

tives for my action, and which I can not get rid of, neither can I always determine with what strength they shall present their impulses. The strongest motive always governs. He who feels hungry, and has a palatable dish within his reach, and has no motive for not eating then and there, must eat, as a matter of necessity. Men cannot create motives by their will, and therefore are not responsible for their motives. In short, the will is governed by the mental constitution, and not the mind by the will.

§ 191. The purpose of all action is self-gratification. Every action is caused by a motive: every motive is the demand of a passion for gratification: every passion is part of the mind, part of the self. This man has a base mind; a mind in which base passions predominate; he has base motives, and commits base actions. His mental constitution tells him to be regardless of the pleasures of other men; to grasp greedily for everything which may conduce to his own immediate comfort. His neighbor has a magnanimous soul, magnanimous passions: his motives are generous, his actions are noble. He finds by experience that he has more pleasure in rendering others happy, than in looking merely after his own bodily comfort. He is generous not for the sake of making others happy, but because to make others happy, is to make himself happy; because the consciousness of having been generous, is one of his keenest pleasures, because the impulse to delight in the consciousness of noble actions, and in giving pleasure to others, is stronger in his mind than the desire for a small physical gratification. The martyr who dies at the stake, when he might save his life, and even be elevated to high honor, by deserting his religion, does the act in accordance with the dictates of his own mind; and by so doing gratifies it. He prefers glorious death to inglorious life. The man who jumps into the water, to save a drowning person, does it to gratify himself. He perhaps was present on a previous occasion when a man was drowned, and did nothing to save him; and probably spoke to himself, thus: "The danger is nothing; I do not fear it; to save him would have been a good deed; his death will cause deep pain to his friends and relatives; I might have saved that to them, and given them great joy; had I saved him, he would have always been a most devot-

ed friend to me ; his sight would have given me joy ; the remembrance of the act would be a source of inextinguishable pride and pleasure, so long as I live ; I would obtain great credit for doing a brave and noble deed ; the knowledge of such an action would follow me, wherever I should go, and confer an imperishable honor on me ; and the honor would be in proportion to the danger. The next time, I see a man drowning, I will try to save him, if there be any probability of success." If we imagine that a man can have any purpose in his actions, save self-gratification, we must suppose also that his motives do not come from his passions, or that his passions are not part of himself ; or that his will is independent of his passions.

§ 192. Philosophers say that every phenomenon has a cause, and that there is apparently a necessary connection between the cause and its effect. Now, if men's actions be the necessary effects of preëxistent causes, and those causes again the effects of other preëxistent causes, and so on up, mounting beyond the birth of the individual, he cannot be responsible for his actions. He is only a blind link in an endless chain. "According to the principle, which denies necessity, and consequently causes, a man is as pure and untainted, after having committed the most horrid crime, as at the first moment of his birth, nor is his character anywise concerned in his actions, since they are not derived from it, and the wickedness of the one can never be used as a proof of the depravity of the other."* All those persons who argue that man is morally responsible for his actions to a creator, also argue that that creator is the great First Cause of every thing which exists, the necessary author of every particle of matter, of every movement of matter, of every natural phenomenon, and of every action. But "if† human actions can be traced up by a necessary chain to the Deity, they can never be criminal, on account of the infinite perfection of that Being, from whom they are derived, and who can intend nothing, but what is altogether good and laudable. Or, if they be criminal, we must retract the attribute of perfection which we ascribe to the Deity, and acknowledge him to be the ultimate author of guilt and moral turpitude in all his

* † HUME, Essay on Liberty and Necessity.

creatures." And of course, in neither case, could he hold men responsible for their unavoidable actions, of which he was the necessary cause, the original author.

§ 193. Different mental faculties are the functions of different organs, which are distinct parts of the brain : and the strength of the faculty depends on the size of the organ. Thus the size of the organs determines the character of the man, and his character determines his actions : and as he cannot change his organs, or alter his character, so he cannot avoid doing as he does. Some phrenological writers have asserted that the organs were dependent for their size on the strength of the faculties, and not *vice versa*, but this statement is as absurd as it would be to say that the size of a muscle depends on its strength, instead of its strength on its size.

§ 194. Every intelligent man has a theory of duty which his reason teaches him, and his conscience urges him, to observe ; and which he desires to observe strictly, but in vain. He feels the struggle between the baser and higher impulses of his nature and he must submit occasionally to see the latter defeated. No man ever did on all occasions successfully resist temptation to do evil, no matter who or what he may have been, or how strongly he desired to do good only. And shall we believe that every man can do what all men would do if they could, and what no man ever did ? The idea is absurd. When all men have the power to resist every temptation to do evil, they will no longer be men.

§ 195. The theories of the theologians are founded on the supposition that there is a special mental faculty called the "Will," which has the duty and power to restrain all the evil impulses. But really, in most cases the impulses have more power to restrain the will than the will to restrain the impulses. The will is nothing more than "a vicissitude of the supremacy of the faculties ;" * and what the will shall determine to do, depends principally on the strength of the different parts of the mind. If any person suppose that he can govern his processes of thought, let him ask himself whether, when on some occasion, in the presence of a young and beautiful person of the other sex, a desire to possess her has not arisen in his mind,—a desire which

* Vestiges of Creation.

would recur to his thoughts in defiance of his most earnest endeavors, by willing to drive it away. The will, acting on behalf of various faculties, may exercise much influence on the thoughts, but is far from having the power to control them. If it had such power, men would banish from their minds the thoughts which cause them to be unhappy. Man is a free agent to a certain extent ; he can do as he pleases, but he must please to do what his character dictates. He may be compared to a chained bear : he is the bear, his character is the chain, and external circumstances are the post to which he is fastened.

§ 196. But the Christian deities are not content with threatening eternal and infinite misery for *deeds* done in violation of the alleged divine commands : they threaten similar punishments to those who do not *think* that the orthodox platform is the only safe conveyance to heaven. The Catholic tells me that, unless I believe the Church to be infallible, I shall go to hell ; the orthodox Protestant tells me that, unless I believe in three Gods, I shall go to hell ; the strict Unitarian tells me that, unless I believe in one God, I shall go to hell ; the Mohammedan tells me that, unless I believe in the Arabian prophet, I shall go to hell ; and the Mormons tell me that, unless I believe in Brigham Young, I shall go to hell. In fact, it matters not which way I go, I shall be condemned to at least a dozen hells, by as many different sects, disappointed of the little aid and comfort which they might have derived from my consenting to wear the yoke of their several creeds. If the rejection of any doctrine be a proper cause for punishment, then belief must be a matter of merit and demerit ; then belief must be subject to the government of the will ; then men should desire to believe *that* doctrine to be true which is the road to heaven, and not that which has the most evidence to support it, for in the latter case they would read the Bible and the Age of Reason in an impartial state of mind, with a disposition to give them "mere indifferent fair play"—a disposition highly reprobated by the Church. How a man can learn that a doctrine is the road to heaven, except because it is true ; how he is to find out that it is true, except by examining the evidence on both sides, with a mind as nearly impartial as possible ; and how he can assert that

he can control his belief by his will, are matters incomprehensible to me. The Christians tell me that I ought to desire to believe their dogmas, and that, if I should desire to believe, I could believe. That is to say, after I have made a full and, as I think, an impartial examination of their evidences and arguments, and after having arrived at the conclusion that their creed is false and prejudicial to the interests of humanity, it is still my duty to desire to believe it. Perhaps other men can govern their belief by their will, but I can not. The offer of ten millions of dollars cash reward for my belief, during the space of but five minutes, that the sky is green, would make me wish to have such a belief ; but the wish would be a vain one. No man, by the conscious influence of his will alone, can govern his belief—no man ever did—no man ever can—and without the possibility of such government, there can, according to human ideas of justice, be no merit or demerit in belief.

The constitution of the human mind requires a man to have prejudices in favor of the form of faith which prevails among all those whom he knows, loves, and respects. The Brahmin youth is prejudiced in favor of Brahminism ; the Mohammedan youth in favor of Islamism ; the Boodhist youth in favor of Boodhism ; the Mormon youth in favor of Mormonism ; and the Christian youth in favor of Christianity. There is no more merit in one prejudice than in another ; and yet, just that prejudice determines the creed of three-fourths of the human race. The different creeds have their source in humanity itself ; “they are only so many steps in the development of mankind.”

“The two and seventy sects, on earth confessed,
Collective dwell in every human breast.”*

* ALGER.—Oriental Poetry.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ABSOLUTE TRUTH UNATTAINABLE BY MAN.

"All that we know is that we know nothing."—SOCRATES.

§ 197. The purpose of this book is to seek truth, and the question now arises : "What is truth ?" The lexicographers say, it is "conformity to fact." But that definition gives no light, for the question immediately follows : "What is fact ?" There is a class of philosophers who say that man can not prove any thing to be *absolutely* true. We shall examine this proposition, and if we find it to be correct, we shall have to conclude, that Christianity is built on a sandy foundation. We learn, what is ordinarily called "truth," or "the reality of things," by sensation and reason,—and by those only. It was at one time asserted that men have "innate" ideas—thoughts born with them ; but this theory is now exploded, and metaphysicians agree upon the two faculties just mentioned as the sources of all our knowledge. Some metaphysicians say that there are two kinds of reason,—the "practical," and the "pure ;" but I shall use the word "reason" in its common and plain meaning, as understood by every man. Consciousness, which informs us of many facts, is a kind of sensation—that kind which perceives our own thoughts and impressions.

§ 198. First then we shall consider the senses as means of learning the truth. It is a well understood principle among natural as well as speculative philosophers that the impressions upon the senses are sometimes not trustworthy ; their reports can not be relied upon as infallible. Sound, light, color, heat, and odor are conceived by the barbarian as "things," material in their nature ; but scientific investigation has demonstrated that they are merely impressions upon the senses caused by different vibrations of the gaseous, or æthereal mediums, which surround the body. Bass sounds are caused by slow vibrations of the air, striking upon the tympanum of the ear ; shrill sounds, by rapid

vibrations. So the various ideas of colors are the impressions on the retina, caused by the different kinds of oscillations imparted to the light-medium, by the object which we look at. Reason discovers the errors of the senses in these cases. In fact, the senses may be said to teach nothing clearly. If it were possible that a man should grow to mature years without the use of any of his senses, and could then be gifted with the use of all of them at once, he would at first derive little knowledge from them. Things seen would appear upside down, and as though immediately against his eyes ; and it would require a long course of teaching, and reasoning, before he could know what he saw. His sense of touch would not teach him at first where the sensation was received ; he would have to learn by experience to connect the reports of the various nerves with the different parts of the body. If hurt, he would feel the pain, but could not tell whence it came. And thus it would be more or less with all the senses : the teachings all have no clearness, until the mind has learned to distinguish the force and meaning of the different impressions after much counter observation, remembering, and comparing. And when once a certain sensation has become connected with a certain idea, it is almost impossible to separate them. Thus men whose legs have been cut off while they were under the influence of chloroform, on returning to consciousness, but before learning of the amputation, have complained of pain or itching in different toes of the severed foot, and have insisted that they were not in error as to the locality of the pain. When told that the leg was cut off, they have obstinately refused to believe it, and could only be convinced by seeing or feeling with the hand. The nerves which led to the amputated parts were irritated, and the sensation was referred by the brain at once to the place where the nerve came to the surface. So when a man's nose is mended with skin from his forehead, any sensation in the new flesh is at first referred to the place with which the sensations of its nerves were from childhood associated. The feelings of touch and pain are perceived as though the different parts of the body were exclusively conscious of those sensations which originate in them severally. Thus, if the finger be

pinched, the pain is felt there, and not in the head, or any other part of the body ; but the sensation is nevertheless in the brain. When the pain is perceived, the memory immediately discovers the place, by former experience, and the feeling is referred by the mind to that place alone. But if the nerve be cut which connects the finger with the brain, then the finger can be carved or bruised in any imaginable manner, and the man has no sensation in it, or from it.

§ 198. All the senses are subject to "illusions" and "hallucinations." It is a notorious fact that many very learned, upright, and strong-minded men suppose that they see, hear, and feel spirits. Socrates frequently heard a "divine voice" as he called it, warning him not to act, as he thought of acting ; and he heard this voice often from childhood until the time of his death ; and he always obeyed it. Joan of Arc frequently saw and conversed with angels, from the time she was thirteen until she was eighteen years of age, when she was executed. Tasso saw and conversed with a spirit in the presence of his friend, Manso. Luther saw the devil, and threw his inkstand at him. Swedenborg saw and conversed with spirits. Brutus saw a phantom which told him, it was his evil spirit, and would meet him at Philippi. There are not less than a thousand persons in the United States now, who say that they frequently see or hear, or both see and hear, the spirits of deceased human beings, and these persons—like those specially named above—sincerely believe in the positive reality of these ghosts, and are beyond the suspicion of any kind of dishonesty. This perception of ghosts is called a "hallucination" by the physiologists, and a special chapter is allotted to it in many of the medical text books on physiology and insanity, it being generally considered a species of cerebral disease.

§ 199. In dreams, too, the senses deceive us. We hear, see, feel, taste and touch, and within the space of a few minutes dream of living through long years. The dream-impression remaining on the mind, is often as strong as that made by the sensations in the waking state, and we can distinguish the recollection of the dream from the recollection of the reality only by seeing that the latter is

connected regularly with our memory of precedent and subsequent events, whereas the dream is cut off at both ends.

§ 200. We learn then by the comparison and criticism of our various sensations that the senses often deceive us, and that we must scrutinize their impressions closely with reason, before receiving them as trustworthy. The consideration of the nature of our perceptions, will also show us, that the testimony of the senses alone will not suffice to prove anything to be absolutely true. I perceive before me a small block of marble ; it is characterized by a certain length, breadth, thickness, color, weight, solidity, chemical nature of its elements, and mechanical arrangement of its particles. I perceive these characteristics, and, indeed, I do not perceive anything else. I perceive the properties of the matter, not the matter itself. But my idea of these properties is merely relative ; I can conceive the property of one object only by comparing it with another. There is no absolute length ; I arrive at the idea only by comparing things which differ in length. So too with color ; if I could perceive but one color, there would be no color for me ; it would be mere light and shade. The blind have no conception of color, and perhaps the nearest approach to such a conception was on the part of the blind man, who, when asked to give a description of scarlet, said, it was like the sound of a trumpet : and the same may be said of all the properties of bodies. Something depends, too, on the condition of the organs of sensation : in certain diseases all objects appear to the eye as if tinged with different colors, according to the nature of the malady. Things which appear soft to the tough hands of a man, are hard to the tender fingers of infants, etc. We cannot take cognizance of the ultimate nature of matter, "nor can* data be furnished by observation or experiment, on which to found an investigation of it." "Of things,† absolutely, or in themselves, we know nothing, or know them only as incognizable ; and we become aware of their incomprehensible existence only, as this is indirectly revealed to us through certain qualities related to our faculties of knowl-

* BRANDE.

† SIR WM. HAMILTON.

edge. All that we know is, therefore, phenomenal, phenomenal of the unknown." We cannot perceive matter itself, and we cannot prove the absolute existence of those properties which we connect with the idea of matter.

§ 201. I say that I perceive not the matter, but only its properties ; and I can perceive the properties only as in relation to other properties. But do I really perceive the properties ? No ; I perceive only my idea of the properties. My perception is conscious of a thought, and of nothing more ; it is impossible from its nature that it should be conscious of any thing else. I think that I see the block of marble, and that thought is the only evidence which I can have that I do see it. I can not go beyond that thought to obtain evidence that the marble exists, and is such a thing as I conceive it to be. I can not discover any necessary reason why the thought should accurately represent the existence and nature of the marble. Man knows of his existence only by thinking, by an idea ; he knows there is a sun only because he sees it, because he thinks he sees it. He can not get beyond the idea ; perhaps the idea agrees to the actual fact ; perhaps it does not ; perhaps there is nothing but the idea. There is no positive evidence—not the remotest particle of evidence—that any thing exists independently of man's idea, or that, if there be any independent existence, it is as the idea represents it to be. "All the choir of heaven, and furniture of earth, all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind," and subsists only while it conceives them. All things, as conceived by us, may be classed under two heads, the "Me," and the "Not-me." The Me is myself, the idea of my own thought ; the Not-me is my idea of matter and of all things, except my thought. For all that we can know to the contrary by absolute proof, the Not-me exists only in the imagination of the Me. The latter, considered philosophically, is not only the cause, but also the essence of all existence, and of all reality.* If substance exists absolutely, then the Me is the only substance, and the Not-me is merely qualities of it. Every thing exists only in and for the Me. Take away the Me, and nothing is left. It makes the conditions of all knowledge,

* CHELLING.—*Das Unbedingte.* §§ 10. 11. 12. 13.

describes the spheres of every thing conceivable, and, as the Absolute and All-including, governs our whole system of thought. All phenomena are merely conditions of the "Me." The universe lies inside of the thinker, not outside of him. In referring all impressions to a *subjective* source, and denying *objective* existence, the idealist returns to his original mode of thought. "If," says Morell, "we could, by any means, transport ourselves into the mind of an infant, before the perceptive consciousness is awakened, we should find it in a state of absolute isolation from every thing else in the world around it. Whatever objects may be presented to the eye, the ear, or the touch, they are treated simply as subjective feelings, without the mind possessing any consciousness of them as objects, at all. To it, the inward world is every thing, the outward world is nothing." Such is infant's mode of thought, to which modern philosophy endeavors to return, in so far as such a thing is possible. Nearly all the metaphysicians of the last hundred years were idealists, and such men as Diderot, D'Alembert, Mackintosh, Dugald Stewart, Brougham, and Carlyle, have approved Turgot's opinion that he, who has never rejected the absolute existence of matter, has no talent for metaphysical reasoning. The great opponent of this idealistic theory was Reid, and he substantially confessed that it was impregnable against every possible attack. His great argument was that the idealists did not believe their own doctrines, for they would not run themselves through with swords. But there is really no inconsistency between the practise and theory of the idealists; they always have acknowledged the relative existence of matter,—such a kind of existence as for all practical purposes is the same as if it were absolute. Man is the slave of his dream—of his idea. He is governed by certain laws which must not be violated. The sword is a mere idea, and yet, to run a sword-idea through a man-idea, is to violate a rule of the dreamer's existence, and a pain-idea, or a death-idea, is the consequence.

§ 202. Memory may be said to be the present consciousness of past events—the reviving of old sensations. This is a kind of knowledge which, like other kinds, has its defects. We imagine sometimes that real events occurred only in dream, and that events dreamed occurred in actual life, and

in such cases, there is no certain criterion of absolute knowledge. Shakespeare* represents a certain Christopher Sly, a drunken vagabond, who had lived in misery and dirt all his life, as having been taken up while intoxicated and asleep, and placed in bed in the palace of a lord. When he had grown sober and awakened, he found a multitude of servants waiting upon him, and the principal ones asked anxiously how he was; expressed great joy at his recovery, and wished to know his commands. He replied that he was quite well, he was Christopher Sly, he dwelt in such a place. They told him that he was the hereditary lord of that castle, but had been crazy since childhood, and had supposed himself to be a certain Christopher Sly, vagabondizing, drinking bad liquor, keeping low company, and lying in the gutters. Finally Christopher was persuaded that all his past life was a dream, and he began to act the lord. He soon got drunk, his fine clothes were taken off, his old rags put on, and he was again placed in the gutter. When he came to himself, it was some time before he could get back to the idea that he was only Christopher Sly, and then he came to the conclusion that his lordship was only a dream. In this story Shakespeare has painted the nature of human knowledge truly. No man has any more secure knowledge of the past than Christopher Sly had : and *he* acted in accordance with the principles which ought to govern a philosophic mind. There is no man who, by skillful management, might not be brought to believe all his past life to be only a dream, an unreality,—the wild imaginings of insanity.

§ 203. We may now pretty safely say that the testimony of the senses can not suffice to prove any proposition to be *absolutely* true : and therefore we turn to reason and ask what she can do. She tells us at once that she is fallible : and in such case, we cannot rely upon her conclusions as infallibly or absolutely true. Truth is said, by metaphysicians, to be “necessary” or “contingent :” arguments are “demonstrative” or “probable.” The only truth which is “necessary” and the only arguments which are “demonstrative” are found in mathematics, or what are called the “*exact* sciences.” Men may and will differ in their opinions about moral, political and religious philosophy and about

*Prologue to ‘Taming the Shrew.’

natural science : but all men admit the truth of the proposition that two and two make four : and so of other mathematical propositions generally. But if we examine the nature of these propositions we shall find that they are "necessary" truths, and their "arguments" are "demonstrative" and their science is "exact" because the truth is implied in the definition of the original terms. No man will deny that two and two make four, simply because the word "four" means something made of two and two. The absolute impossibility of escaping from a definition was well discovered by a little boy in a Sunday school, whose class was told by the teacher that God could do anything. The scholar said he knew something that God could not do. After a proper expression of horror at the supposed blasphemy, the teacher demanded what it was that God could not do. The juvenile skeptic replied, "He can't make a four-year-old colt in a minute"; and after some study the teacher concluded that the boy was right; even Omnipotence must fail in attempting such a task.

§ 204. Perhaps in no point is the inability of the mind to discover absolute truth shown more strikingly than in the fact that we cannot discover any *necessary* connection between cause and effect. We speak of a necessary effect, but the necessity is a mere presumption. We know that certain phenomena are always followed by certain other phenomena, and we call the former cause and the latter effect : and because the connection is invariable we call it necessary. We learn the connection by experience : we never could learn it by abstract reasoning. If some new natural object were discovered to-morrow, we could not know what effect it would produce under certain imaginable circumstances except by experiment, or guessing from the result of previous experience with other substances to which the new object appeared to bear a resemblance. We may discover a vast number of intermediate causes intervening between remote causes and effects, but the necessity of the connection is none the more clear. A blow on the hand gives pain, because the flesh is bruised ; because the bruise prevents the healthy circulation of blood ; because without healthy circulation of the blood, the nerves are not supplied properly with the material requisite for their nor-

mal action, and because when they have not such material they complain of pain. But we have come no nearer to the discovery of the *necessary* connection after tracing all these intermediate steps than we were before. The physiologist will argue to you that the blow *must* give pain, because—and here he traces all the intermediate causes, and shows that these causes *always* have produced these effects, heretofore and *therefore* must always do so hereafter. “Philosophy” says Solly “is the discovery of the universality of a fact.” We say that wherever one phenomenon is invariably followed by another, the former is the cause and the latter the effect. And yet we do not say that day is the cause of night or night of day. But in these cases we discover intermediate sequences which connect day and night with the changing positions of the sun, and not with each other in the relation called cause and effect.

§ 205. Reason cannot alone prove anything to be absolutely true, because in its very nature it can only draw conclusions from admitted premises. All argumentation, which is the only and exclusive domain of reason, may be reduced to syllogisms. Every syllogism is necessarily composed of three parts, a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion. Here is an example :

Major Premise.—All men are mortal.

Minor Premise.—James is a man.

Conclusion.—James is mortal.

Without a major and a minor premise, expressed or understood, there can be no syllogistic conclusion—no sound argument. The truth of the two premises is always assumed in any single syllogism, but they may be proved in other syllogisms. The major premise in the above syllogism may be proved as follows :

1. All animals are mortal.
2. All men are animals.
3. All men are mortal.

By rising in that manner from one syllogism to another, we at last arrive at the great original premise, on which all knowledge is based—“I exist.” As this is the last of all premises, so it cannot be proved by reason. We must accept it for what it is worth in the testimony of

consciousness. "The absolute existence of the 'Me,'" says Schelling,* "lies beyond the possibility of objective proof ***. Myselfhood implies an existence which precedes all thinking and representation. Its existence consists in its conception of itself, and it is conceived because it exists, because it exists and is conceived only so far as it conceives itself." "Except† some first principles be taken for granted, there can be neither reason, nor reasoning. It is impossible that every truth should admit of proof, otherwise proof would extend ad infinitum. If ever men attempt to prove a first principle, it is because they are ignorant of the nature of proof." Abercombie, one of the most acute of the late metaphysicians, whose associations and character were not favorable to idealistic prejudices, says: "Many ingenious but fallacious arguments were at one time wasted in attempting to establish by processes of reasoning" the propositions "that we exist, that external things are as they appear, that our memory must tell truth, and that every event must have a cause"; and in making that admission, he speaks the general opinion of the speculative philosophers of the age. "It is supposed‡ by many, that by means of reasoning we can arrive at conceptions, of which we have no previous idea, whatever. This supposition, however, it is almost needless to say, will not bear examination. Whether our reasoning be inductive or deductive, the conclusion of the whole is always virtually involved in the premises. To reason at all, we must have certain data, and must also employ distinct and intelligible terms; but it is evident these data and these terms always imply an amount of experience in the question, without which all our reasoning would be empty, and beyond which our conclusion can never go. Logical reasoning alters the *relations* of our ideas—it never transcends them. It makes our knowledge more distinct: it does not expand the horizon of our mental vision." Between the physiologists, who prove that mind cannot exist, except as dependent upon matter, and the psychologists, who prove that the existence of matter cannot be demonstrated, absolute truth seems to fare badly.

* *Das Unbedingte* § 3.

† ARISTOTLE. Translated in Abercombie on the Intellectual Powers.

‡ MORELL. *Philosophy of Religion*.

It may be asked, "If there be no truth, why this book?" But I have not said there is no truth; I have merely denied the possibility of attaining *absolute* truth; I recognize the existence and high importance of relative truth. I admit, that men must live as if there were an absolute, outward, material world; I do not wish a body to kick me, because I assert that he cannot prove himself to be an actual body, independently of my thought. I merely wish to question his absolute being, when he comes to dogmatize at me.

§ 206. But what is truth? The Boodhist, the Moham-
medan, the Brahmin, the Christian, and the Mormon, each asserts that his faith is true, and each is ready to prove the sincerity of his assertion by martyrdom, if necessary. Is there no truth? Or may a dozen propositions, inconsistent with each other, all be true? How shall I know whether my neighbor is right or myself, when we come to different conclusions, reasoning from the same premises? Is there no criterion of truth, to which all mankind can resort for the purpose of harmonizing their opinions, as weights and measures are regulated according to standards fixed by government? No! there is no such criterion. The history of Philosophy may be sought through in vain for any touchstone by which truth is to be known. Christian theologians once pretended that they had found the standard in the Bible, but the pretension is now abandoned. Truth is not "conformity to fact," but it is "the conformity of a proposition, with the constitution of the human mind." What that constitution is, every one must discover for himself, in his own soul; and since minds are not all alike, so truth is not the same for all men. Beauty and morality are akin to truth, in so far as they are the conformity of moral principles, or of objects perceived by the senses, to the constitution of the mind; and in regard to them, too, there are diversities of opinions among men equally wise and benevolent. Much that is true for me, is false for my neighbor. Scarcely any proposition can be imagined more evidently true to a savage, than that the sun revolves round the earth, or moves through the sky from East to West every day; and it is just as evidently false to me. Why do we differ? Because our states of mental enlightenment

differ. Because I know more of the constitution of my mind, than he does of his. The investigation of truth is the examination of the laws of one's own mind. As Emerson says, the human soul is the text of all study. The books of the historians, poets and philosophers, are only the comments upon it. I read in them only, to find the meaning and capabilities of myself. When I read the history of the Athenian democracy, consider the progress of the American republic, study the details of Napoleon's campaigns, look at Carlyle's picture of the French revolution, or become absorbed in Faust or Jane Eyre, I am learning what there is in my own brain. All the great works of great men are to me as though done by myself,—unconsciously—in a state of mental exaltation; and I need to look over those works, to see whether I can not raise myself to the level of that exaltation, and preserve myself there. When I seek truth, I seek to know what is within me,—not what is without. When I am true to my convictions, when I speak and act according to my faith, I do my duty to my own soul,—not to some idol which exists outside and in despite of me.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE.

"Adieu, oh Church ! Thy road is that way, mine is this : in God's name, adieu !"—CARLYLE.

§ 207. We have heard the testimony against the Bible: let us look back, and try to sum up the facts proved.

The God of the Christians is a material being, with a body bearing a resemblance more or less close to that of men and monkeys. He walks, talks, eats, works, and rests. He has a mind similar to that of man. He is gratified by praise, and is indignant at neglect. He selects certain men to be his favorites, and he is the enemy of their enemies. In ancient times he was in habit of frequently visiting earth : he took part in human battles ; he murdered tens and hundreds of thousands at a blast. However, he is not without pity, if we may believe the Scriptures which represent himself as frequently repenting for the evil which he proposed to do, and had done to his people.

Jesus, the Savior, and part of Jehovah, had no thought of establishing Christianity as now taught. He, perhaps, intended to organize a revolt of the Jews, and for this purpose claimed to be the Messiah of Jewish prophecy. Probably he imagined that under the pretext of being a teacher of religion, he could more conveniently organize his party than by other means, and therefore began in that way. He obeyed the Mosaic law, as did all his apostles and disciples ; and so far as his religious teaching was concerned, it was an insignificant variation from the Pharisaical doctrines, and would scarcely have served as the foundation of a sect. Ten years after the death of Jesus, his disciples and apostles in Jerusalem were astonished at the proposition that they should keep fellowship with a man, who had not been circumcised, and who did not observe the ceremonial law of the nation. They had never heard such a doctrine from him. If he commanded them to preach his doctrines to

others than the Jews, it was with the clear condition, that all the Gentile converts should be circumcised, and should observe the Mosaic ritual. Jesus was not an admirable character. He acted in a cowardly manner, when the Romans were about to arrest him : and he was a person, so little known, that the officers had to bribe one of his own party, not only to point out his place of concealment, but to designate the person. When under arrest, he was deserted by his friends, who, according to the Bible, believed him to be God himself. He thought that many diseases are caused by the entrance of devils into the body : he imagined that a juggling trick should suffice to prove the truth of all that the juggler may assert. He cursed a tree, because it did not bear fruit out of season : and he threatened the most terrible punishments to people who would not believe his claims to a divine mission.

Paul first taught the doctrines which are now received as the fundamental dogmas of Christianity. He claimed to have a commission from the Jewish Jehovah, authorizing him to revoke the doctrine that the Jews were especial Divine favorites, and to abrogate the laws enforcing the observance of circumcision, worship by sacrifice, the Pass-over, and the Mosaic Sabbath. Paul got into the church by queer means. He was not converted by any of the apostles, but pretended to have received a revelation, for his own especial benefit, in the form of a vision. He told three or four contradictory stories about this vision. He said that the men who were with him saw a great light, and he said they did not. He said they heard a voice, and he said they did not. He said they fell to the ground, and he said they did not. When he went to Jerusalem, and told this story, the disciples would not believe him ; they would have nothing to do with him. They never recognized him as a Christian ; the legitimate Apostles never recognized him as one of their body. When he went to Jerusalem, the Christian Jews raised a mob, and to escape their vengeance, he went into the Temple, under the advice of the Apostle James, and took a solemn and false oath, that he did not teach his converts to neglect the ritual of Moses.

David is represented in the Bible as being the greatest favorite whom Jehovah ever had on earth. He

was a man "after God's own heart." He was an inspired prophet. He was chosen as the head of the dynasty which should rule forever over the temporal interests of God's chosen people, and as the progenitor of the Divine man who should bring salvation to all mankind. And yet David commenced his public life as the leader of a filibustering gang of vagabonds, bankrupts and outcasts. He murdered the people and plundered the property of the king who gave him shelter. He started out to slay a man who had properly refused to submit to his extortionate demands. He obtained the throne of Israel by bribes. He murdered the sons and grandsons of the king whose throne he had usurped. He sent a traitor to betray his own son. He committed adultery with Bathsheba, murdered her husband, and then married her. When he had become powerful, and was firmly fixed on his throne, he discarded his wife, who when a king's daughter, had loved him, then a poor adventurer, and who had saved his life from the murderous designs of her father ; and his only reason for this divorce was that she laughed at him when he danced naked in the streets. He massacred every male in Edom, slaughtered two-thirds of the conquered Moabites, and when he had taken Rabbah, he cut the men with saws, beat them with hammers, and roasted them on brick-kilns. And finally he died, ordering his son to murder the men whom he disliked, but whose lives he had sworn not to take.

The Jews, though Jehovah's chosen people,—though he manifested himself by miracles to them frequently,—though he gave them a constant supply of great prophets, who possessed supernatural power, and held the positions of political rulers, were yet in constant rebellion against him. For a thousand years after Moses, they were almost incessantly engaged in worshipping idols, offering incense to Baal, burning their children as sacrifices, and observing all the obscene rites of worship which prevailed among the most licentious of the Heathen. Instead of being models of piety and morality, as might be imagined, from their choice as divine favorites, they were among the basest and vilest of nations.

The Bible teaches the superstitious notions of the existence of a material hell, a personal, material devil, angels, witches, and sorcerers. It declares that the universe was

once governed, not by natural laws, but by the immediately-acting will of Jehovah. Before the time of Jesus, he ruled creation on a system entirely different from that which prevails now. He appeared in person to men, spoke with them, ate with them, gave them laws, made coats and houses for them, sent angels to them, revealed himself to them in visions, commissioned prophets to speak for him, expressed his will in lots, was pleased with sacrifices, authorized his favorites to perform miracles, permitted ghosts to become visible to human eyes, and to speak audibly to human ears, and he rewarded virtue, and punished vice, like a human judge, while the workers of good and evil were still living, and where the example might be of value to deter others from sin, and encourage them to live righteously. We all know that the universe is governed on these principles no longer : and if, indeed, Jehovah was the governor in ancient times, and governed, as reported in the Bible, might we not reasonably suspect that he is dead ? Is it not quite as likely that he should have died, as that his whole character and mode of life should have changed ?

The Bible speaks falsely, when it asserts that the universe is only six thousand years old ; that the earth required five days for the making, and all the rest of the universe but one ; that light was made before the planets ; that birds were made before reptiles ; that all land-animals now existing, are the descendants of pairs preserved in an ark from a universal deluge : that there was a universal deluge : that each distinct species of animal was created by a distinct act of Jehovah : that all species of animals ate only vegetable food before the flood : that heaven is a solid arch, with a stock of water above it : and that the varieties of language are owing to a miraculous confusion of tongues, inflicted by Jehovah as a punishment on the impious people of Babel.

The chronology of the Old Testament, previous to the time of David, is entirely lacking in those characteristics, which are considered necessary to trustworthiness in other ancient histories ; and, besides, is contradicted by the Bible itself, by the facts of natural history, and by the monuments of Egypt. The reported details of the emigration of the Jews from Egypt are evidently fictitious. The history of

Jesus himself is, to a considerable extent, mythic and undeserving of credit.

The Bible is full of contradictory statements. The *Kings* and *Chronicles* contradict each other in every chapter. The various genealogies of Jesus are full of discrepancies, as are also the various accounts of his resurrection.

The Christians represent Jehovah as a perfect being, and yet, their Scriptures assert, that, at different times, he taught men that there is a future life, and that there is not : that he rewards and punishes virtue and vice in this life to the full extent that is necessary for the vindication of his justice, and that he does not ; that the only punishment of Adam was inflicted on earth, and that its chief punishment shall be inflicted after leaving the earth : that God is a pure unit, and that he is a three-fold unit : and that the Mosaic law should remain in force forever, and that it should not.

The morality of Moses and Jesus is defective. They legalize slavery and polygamy. The Old Testament justifies concubinage, treachery, revenge, and assassination, and oppression towards the Gentiles. The New Testament declares that all forms of government, all institutions of tyranny are established by God, and cannot be resisted, or overturned without incurring his anger. Jesus teaches that poverty and celibacy are virtues, and gives a broad hint that men particularly desirous of getting to heaven, should emasculate themselves. He degrades woman, and does not recognize the rights of man.

None of the prominent Mosaic or Christian doctrines were original with the teachers, who are represented in the Bible as having first taught them by divine authority. All the important doctrines of Moses—those of monotheism, a hereditary and dominant priesthood, the use of sacred books, of a temple for divine worship, circumcision, the observance of one day in seven as sacred, the partiality of the Deity for one nation, and divine worship by sacrifice, incense and numerous and complicated ceremonies—all were copied from the Egyptians. The important doctrines of the New Testament—those of the trinity, the incarnation, original sin, redemption by the sacrifice of a god, the immortality of the soul, rewards and punishments in a fu-

ture life, for deeds done in this, the necessity of belief to salvation, the uselessness of ceremonial worship, the merit of poverty, self-denial, humility and submission to wrong, and even many of the details of the peculiar history of the conception, birth and early history of Jesus—all these are copied directly or indirectly from the Boodhists and Platonists, or from other heathen sects, or philosophical schools of Europe and Asia.

The doctrines of Judaism and Christianity appear to have been developed by the same gradual growth as has marked the history of all other systems of human opinion. In early times, God communicated directly with men, and rewarded and punished them immediately for their good and evil deeds. Abraham worshipped a family-god ; Moses a national god ; the Israelites, after the Babylonian captivity, worshipped one only omnipotent God : and Paul worshipped a God who looks with equal favor on all men. As the doctrine of immediate divine government declined among the Pagans, so did it among the Jews. Jehovah appeared in his visible shape to Adam, Noah, and Abraham : he spoke to Moses : but in later times he did not condescend to communicate with men otherwise than by angels, and finally only by visions.

The Biblical reports of miracles bear the marks of the superstition, credulity, and dishonesty of the writers. The reports are conflicting : but if they agreed, they would not suffice to prove their own truth : and proof that Jesus had raised a dead man to life, would not prove him to have possessed supernatural power ; nor would the possession of supernatural power have proved him to be possessed of supernatural truth ; nor if possessed of supernatural truth, could he be justified in seeking to convert men by miracles ; which, used as a means for mastering men's belief, insult and degrade reason.

There is not in the whole Old Testament one prediction clearly foretelling the coming or character of Jesus ; nor is there one prophecy which exhibits any wonderful foreknowledge on the part of its author. The Evangelists misunderstood the Old Testament ; and supposed many passages to be prophetic, which have evidently no other meaning than the plain historical one. The most important and

clearest predictions of the Bible—those of the coming of Christ in the first century, of a royal Messiah who should reëstablish the Jewish nationality, and of the perpetuity of the Mosaic law, the kingdom of Israel, and the dynasty of David—have not been, and never can be fulfilled. The predictions of the destruction of Tyre, Babylon, Damascus, Jerusalem, Mount Seir and Egypt, have none of them been fulfilled.

The laws, the history, the poetry, and the proverbs possess no such great literary excellence as we might anticipate from a book inspired by Jehovah ; but their defects are so great that no author of reputation in the present age could produce a book, containing so many absurdities and violations of the laws of literary taste.

The books of the Bible are not genuine. *Genesis* was not written by any one man, but was patched together from two old documents, the fragments of which are plainly discoverable, and have been recognized by nearly all the great Biblical critics of the present time. Thus, the story of Adam's Fall, which is the foundation of Christ's mission, is reduced to a fable. As the first and most important book of the Old Testament is a forgery, so also is the first and most important book of the New. The only knowledge of the authorship of *Matthew* is that tradition says the Apostle Matthew wrote a gospel in Hebrew. The same tradition says that he wrote for the Jewish Christians ; and that the descendants of those Jewish Christians for whom he wrote preserved a book purporting to be his gospel but differing much from our present Gospel of *Matthew* : whence, more especially since the original of our *Matthew* is in Greek and not in Hebrew, we must conclude that our book is not the genuine work of that apostle. The Gospels of *Mark* and *Luke* were either copied from *Matthew*, or else all three copied from some more ancient manuscript.

We know that no part of the Bible has come down to us uncorrupted. One hundred and fifty thousand variations occur in the text of the ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, from which our present text has been taken. Most of the Christian commentators admit that there are several hundred forged and spurious passages in the Bible as we now have it, and we learn from the Scriptures 1

selves, that twenty books, mentioned in them as inspired, have been lost.

Man is an animal ; he has similar organs and faculties with other animals. All his faculties, so far as known, are functions of material organs. His mind, judging from all the facts and analogies of Physiology known to us, is the function of his brain. If the brain be injured or diseased, the mind is injured ; the strength of the mind depends on the size of the brain ; the brain must have rest after the mind has been exerted ; the mind loses its vigor when old age attacks the brain ; the exercise of the mind is always accompanied by a proportionate wearing away of the substance of the brain ; over-exertion of the mind causes pain in the brain ; when the mind is excited, the brain demands an unusually large supply of blood ; intelligence and memory have their seats in the cerebrum ; the power of combining the muscles in harmonious action resides in the cerebellum ; and consciousness is a function of the sensory ganglia. All these facts go to show that the mind is the mere function of the brain, as bile-secretion is the function of the liver ; and if such be the case, we must conclude, unless there be some evidence to the contrary, and there is none yet, that the mind dies with the brain.

The belief in an anthropomorphic Creator and Governor of the universe is founded on assumptions. The anthropomorphists assume that because the design in the mechanism of a watch proves that it was made by an intelligent person, therefore, the apparently more profound design in nature proves that the universe was created by a personal intelligence. They assume that Gods must use means to attain ends ; for that is implied in design. They assume that the forces inherent in matter will not suffice to account for the phenomena of nature ; whereas science declares that she has sought through the universe without finding any supernatural being or any trace of one. They assume that the existence of an anthropomorphic Governor is consistent with the admitted existence of omnipotent and eternal law. They assume that the forces existing in matter are inferior in power to animal life and consciousness, and could not have produced them. They assume that after they have proved the existence of their God, they may

reasonably stop and say he has no parents or kin, never was created, but existed of himself from all eternity. They assume that this God may be at once personal and infinite. They assume that he can live without body, think without brain, see without eyes, and hear without ears.

The Bible teaches that a perfect personal Creator and Governor of the Universe will reward belief in Christianity with infinite pleasure, and punish disbelief in it with infinite sufferings in a future life. But we have seen that men are the slaves of motives ; that motives have their origin in personal character and external circumstances ; that both these are beyond the control of the individual ; and therefore his conduct could not be matter of merit or demerit, in so far as his Creator might be concerned. Every natural phenomenon is the effect of a preëxisting and determining cause : and human actions, being natural phenomena, are not mere arbitrary and disconnected events, but are portions of the endless chain of causes and effects : and are therefore necessary and unavoidable. Besides belief is not a matter of volition : and if it were, the will should not be used, because reason alone is the proper judge of truth and should be left free to form whatever conclusion may be supported by the strongest evidence. The absurdity of the doctrine, that rejection of Christianity will be punished by infinite pains in hell, appears still more evident when we remember that, according to the Christian doctrine, miracles and revelations have ceased : and therefore the men of this age are deprived of the evidence upon which alone Jesus and the Apostles relied for the proof of the truth of their doctrines. Paul lived in the time of Jesus and the Apostles, had an opportunity of hearing their preaching and seeing their miracles and yet did not believe until Jesus gave him a special revelation. Thomas refused to believe until he had thrust his finger into the wounded side of the crucified God : and yet I am threatened with eternal hell for doubting when I have not a tenth part of the evidence, in the presence of which Paul was an open scoffer, and Thomas a skeptic of the resurrection of Jesus.

We have closed our investigation by a consideration of the nature of truth. We have seen that it is not a thing existing independently of man, but that it depends upon

him. Truth for me is the conformity of a proposition with the laws of my mind : and thus the alleged truths of the existence and nature of God, the divine origin of Christianity, and a future state with rewards and punishments are not absolutely true, but merely relative. I have to make them from within, not to learn them from without, if I am to find them true.

The rejection * of *historical* Christianity, as it is called,—the denial of the truth of the history of Jesus in the New Testament and of the written testimony brought forward to corroborate it—must in reason be accompanied by the rejection of *sentimental* Christianity. The testimony for both rests only on probabilities. We want certainty. We know of no absolute certainty—surely of none beyond the limit of momentary consciousness—a certainty that vanishes the instant it exists, and is lost in the regions of metaphysical doubt. Beyond this limit, absolute certainty, so far as human reason may judge, cannot be the privilege of any finite being.

True religion is a universal want. It is required for the development of man's moral nature. It is connected not with any particular faculty, or faculties, but with his whole intellectual being. This true religion, we are told, can be found only in Christianity : but this rests on something extrinsic to our nature, on testimony. Not only does this testimony admit of doubt, but it requires investigation. The capacity and means for a proper investigation are far from being common to all : and many, or rather a large majority, must therefore receive Christianity, if they receive it all, without any satisfactory evidence of its truth—as a matter taken upon trust—in blind reliance upon the opinion of others—in short, as a matter of superstition. The history of this alleged miraculous revelation is contained in certain books. In them are contained the doctrines supposed to be revealed. But a question immediately arises respecting the genuineness of these books. It cannot be certainly proved: for certainty is inconsistent with the nature of the only evidence that can be produced. This evidence is moreover such as requires much learning and study to enable any one

* This and the two succeeding paragraphs are altered from NORTON on the Latest Form of Infidelity.

by himself, to estimate its force. And supposing the genuineness of the books to be rendered probable, they are in ancient languages, understood by a few : and even when the language is mastered, still much varied knowledge is necessary to give them a probable explanation. By the generality, therefore, the historical fact of a revelation, the genuineness of its supposed records, and the purport of its supposed doctrines must all be received upon trust : and the few who have the capacity and means of investigation, can at best attain to nothing more than probable, not certain conclusions : whereas religion, to be universal, should have an assured foundation in the very nature of man. It can rest upon nothing extrinsic to it.

Besides, Christianity depends upon the belief in a personal divinity who immediately governs the universe, and in the immortality of the soul. Now, the evidence of these dogmas is not intuitive, and whatever ground for the belief of them may be afforded by the phenomena of nature, or the ordinary course of events, it is certain that the generality of men have never been able by their reason to obtain assurance concerning them, and many are not able to conceive of them as understood by us. A peculiar grade of civilization is required for their comprehension, another grade for belief in them : and a still higher grade requires their inevitable rejection. Christianity thus appears to us to be on a par with all the systems of earth-born superstition. Its substance and its evidence must be sought in history, and tradition, and fortuitous circumstance : it has no necessary connection with the inborn impulses, which lead us to love truth, and beauty, and justice, and to rejoice in their contemplation : it has not its origin within us, and when presented from without, it does not force itself with an instantaneous and irresistible conviction upon the mind, but appears connected with myriads of wrongs, abuses, errors, superstitions, and corruptions, and in no respect can claim any higher preëminence over other creeds than such as might naturally have been expected from a system formed under the influence of Grecian philosophy. Ninety-nine out of a hundred of those who have believed in Christianity, have believed as they took their medicine : with a blind faith in the professional skill of the physician. Wit

truth of his science, or the thoroughness of his knowledge, they knew nothing more than what they had heard from common report :—that he was a regular, orthodox doctor, had a collegiate education, and was reputed to be as good as the common run of doctors—perhaps the best in his vicinity. On this trust, they swallow pills and powders in blind confidence : and as a reward for such confidence in matters of “ religion,” as they call it,—of “ superstition,” as I call it,—they seriously inform me that they shall enjoy everlasting and infinite delight in a future life. I hope they may get it.

Such is the evidence on which the reader is asked to form his opinion, and determine whether he can be a Christian. Such is the evidence upon which most of the learned and independent thinkers of this age have rejected the Bible : and upon this evidence I am confident that all civilized men will, at no distant time, discard Christianity. This is, by no means, all the evidence, which might be produced against the Bible ; but it is all which appeared suitable in a book intended for the million. And this evidence, and every part of it, as I allege, and verily believe, is perfectly sound and trustworthy : it has not been, and it cannot be invalidated by any contrary testimony. It was not my place to argue the Christian side of the question, but it was my duty to grant all the Christians could prove ; and this I have done. I cannot call to mind a solitary point of importance, clearly established by the advocates of the Bible, which I have not admitted. And that the reader may do justice to the subject, and, if he desire, test my fairness, let him read Paley, Butler, and Jenyns, and as many Christian authors as he can, and see for himself whether their “ evidences ” are not mere chaff as compared with those here collected.

It is said that the emperor Julian, on his death-bed, seeing that the worship of Jesus had taken a firm hold upon the minds of the people, and vexed to think that with all his power and exertion, he had not been able to overthrow the new superstition, gave vent to his vexation by exclaiming “ O, Galilean ! Thou hast conquered ! ” He was right. The Galilean had conquered Julian was completely defeated : all his labors had been in vain. For fourteen

centuries, the poor Galilean, of an "equivocal birth, wandering life, and ignominious death," has been the God of the Caucasian race. But his Godship is at an end. In behalf of the great men whose anti-Christian philosophy I have endeavored to collect and arrange methodically in this book, I venture to revoke the dying declaration of Julian, and to issue another suited to the position of Christianity in the present age. Not in the shame and mortification of irretrievable defeat, but in the exultation of the certain triumph of my cause, I declare "O, Galilean! Thou art conquered!"

CHAPTER XXX.

HOW REPLACE CHRISTIANITY ?

'I have delivered you from a ferocious beast which was devouring you, and you ask me what I shall give you in its place !' VOLTAIRE.

§ 208. When an attack is made on the Bible, Christians and even "Infidels" are heard to demand "What do you propose to give us in its place?" Many of them care little about Christianity, but they wish to have some religious creed of recognized authority. They imagine that "religion" is necessary, at least among the "common people," as a support to morality ; and they look upon an anthropomorphic God and a future state, with rewards and punishments, as indispensable parts of that "religion." In short, their great concern is to have something to assist detective police regulations, and they can conceive of nothing better for that purpose than the Christian superstition.

They imagine that morality cannot stand alone ; that it must soon expire if not bolstered up by some fictions of heaven and hell. But it appeared to me that these persons mistake the nature of both morality and religion. There is no merit, no loveable quality in acts done merely for the sake of outside "pudding or praise" on earth or in heaven

When it is a settled matter that society is held together by such support only, then it were well that it should separate, and that the separate parts should go to the Christian devil. The support that morality wants is not religion, but religiousness—that devout, earnest, good-loving spirit which may be found, in high and admirable development, among Greeks and Romans, Brahmins, Boodhists, Parsees, Confucianists, Mohammedans, Atheists and Pantheists, as well as among Christians. If “Christianity” be necessary to morality, then man is indeed unfortunate ; dependent for his virtue not on himself, not on the cultivation of his reason, not on his disposition to love and serve his fellow-men, but on his reception of a particular set of opinions, whether he comprehend them or not, whether they appear reasonable and probable to him or not, whether even they ever come to his ears or not. If Christianity be necessary to morality, then sad is the fate of those peoples which have known, which could know, and which do know so little of it. If belief in the Bible—even a blind and superstitious belief, as with most Christians it ever has been—were necessary to morality, then all the nations of Christendom should at once combine and exert all their powers to keep men from being immoral on earth and being damned in hell, by taking into their own hands the government of all countries, by teaching the all-saving creed to every human mind, by prohibiting, under the severest penalties, all expression of doubt or disbelief in it, and by suppressing all science and philosophy as dangerous in their tendencies and of no service for the great purpose of this life—the attainment of a “through-ticket” to the higher spheres of heaven.

Fortunately for humanity, morality depends for its existence and development upon no priest-built platform. The mind of man at birth contains within itself the germ of “love” which grows at even pace with the other intellectual faculties. “The rule* of life drawn from the practice and opinions of men corrects and improves itself, till at last, it determines entirely for virtue, and excludes all kinds of vice.” “Sound reason† is a true law, conformable to nature, constant, unchangeable, eternal, and common to all men. It

* HARTLEY.

* CICERO, *De Rep.* Lib. 3.

commands them to do good, and forbids them to do evil. * * No one has the right to reject, to change, or to annul any portion of this law ; no person can be freed from his obligation of observing it, either by the senate or by the people : its own internal light suffices to render it clear and intelligible ; it is the same at Rome and at Athens, to-day and to-morrow ;—alone, eternal, and invariable, it binds all nations and all times.”

But we must take not what we desire to have, but what we can get ; and no matter how much men may desire to have Christianity—no matter how valuable it might be in providing celestial or terrestrial “ pudding”—no matter how essential it might be for the conservation of society, and of the “ fat” positions of certain members of society—it cannot be valuable for those purposes much longer. Its fate is fixed ; its doom is written, in unmistakeable characters, upon the history of the civilized world during the last four hundred years. Only the greatest blindness can prevent a man from seeing the characters ; only the greatest ignorance can prevent him from understanding them.

The war between humanity and Christianity began with the revival of learning, and the former has continued to gain strength in geometrical ratio, in every succeeding age. Every great advance of science or art has come to its aid. Those who never pothered themselves seriously with the question, whether the true moral revelation is to be found within or without, yet furnished arms to be used against the old superstition. The blindest bigots, who opposed freethought—the greatest tyrants, who oppressed its advocates, could not stem its progress for an instant : often they saw it only gain strength from their opposition. Immediately after Descartes promulgated his great principle, that nothing must be believed till it has been doubted, humanity appeared at last fully armed for the fight : she then encamped in the field, and she has never left it since. Galileo, intending to tell nothing more than what he saw through his telescope, exposed the Biblical falsehood of a solid firmament, of heavenly lights made merely to wait on the earth, and of a revolving sun, which might be stopped “ upon Gibeon ” whenever a Joshua might see fit to issue the order. A century later, the idea began to become

clear, that the universe is governed by universal, omnipotent, and invariable natural laws. Dr. Middleton, amidst cries of horror, from the orthodox churches, both Catholic and Protestant, exposed the frauds of the pretended miracles of the Catholic Church subsequently to the time of the Apostles. Hume wiped away all miracles. Berkeley denied the existence of matter : Hume threw his unanswerable skepticism over the connection between cause and effect, and over all kinds of certitude in knowledge. The popular belief in possession of diseased persons by devils, began to die away soon after the Reformation : and two centuries later, ghosts and witches were demolished. Voltaire and his associates sowed broadcast, among the people, the antichristian doctrines of political and religious freedom. Special providences were soon sent to follow miracles, in the storehouse of wornout absurdities. Astronomy, Geology, Physiology, Phrenology, Egyptology, Ethnology, and Comparative Philology followed each other, in swift succession, in pouring hot shot upon the crumbling, combustible, and disabled edifice of Christianity. Every year has seen some successful assault upon the Bible : now it is Bentham, now De Wette, now Strauss, now Hennell : and the Christians can do, and have done, nothing save hide behind tradition, and the inertia of popular opinion. They know that their creed must be demolished at no distant day ; but they hope by submissive silence to put off the flood until after their time.

The war is not yet ended ; humanity is flushed with past conquests and certain of speedy and final victory. She has learned that revolutions never go backward. She sees her forces strong on every side—Germany, France, England and America, each furnish millions of their best and bravest for the conflict, while the *Westminster Review*, the ablest periodical of the age, bears high aloft the glorious standard of freethought, and literature generally smiles approval. Christianity has lost most of her life-blood : her wounds are such that she never can recover ; the death-chill of indifferentism has already seized her extremities ; the convulsions of formalism and hypocrisy are torturing the little life that remains, and the premonitory symptoms of total dissolution are already visible. “In the revolutions of the human mind,”

posed almost every beneficial reform mentioned in history. And if the freethinkers succeed in extending the area of popular education and of political and social freedom and equality, shall we fear that society and morality will be endangered? By no means. The old creed will soon be dead; the new religion must soon take its place; let us trust that humanity has within itself the germ of development to a higher form than it has yet reached; let us believe that when we seek to do right we are right; and let us hope that such doing will be for the best—not only for ourselves individually but for all mankind.

“Let * not then the mind, which is compelled to renounce its belief in miraculous revelations, deem itself bound to throw aside at the same time all its more cherished associations. Its generous emotions and high contemplations may still find an occasion for exercise in the review of the interesting incidents which have forever consecrated the plains of Palestine; but it may also find pleasure in the thought that for this exercise, no single spot of earth and no one page of its history, furnishes the exclusive theme. Whatever dimness may gather from the lapse of time and the obscurity of tradition about the events of a distant age, these capabilities of the mind itself remains, and always will remain, in full freshness and beauty. Other Jerusalems will excite the glow of patriotism, other Bethanies exhibit the affections of home, and other minds of benevolence and energy seek to hasten the approach of the kingdom of man's perfection. Nor can scriptures ever be wanting—the scriptures of the physical and moral world—the book of the universe. Here the page is open and the language intelligible to all men; no transcribers have been able to interpolate or erase its texts; it stands before us in the same genuineness as when first written; the simplest understanding can enter with delight into criticism upon it; the volume does not close, leaving us to thirst for more, but another and another epistle still meets the inquisitive eye, each signed with the author's own hand, and bearing undoubted characters of divine inspiration.”

* HENNELL. *Origin of Christianity.*

says Robert Hall, "exploded *opinions* are often revived ; but an exploded superstition never recovers its credit. The pretension to [infallible] divine revelation is so august and commanding, that when its falsehood is once discerned, it is covered with all the ignominy of detected imposture ; it falls from such a height that it is inevitably crushed to atoms." The old creed sinks away ; the new religion rises before us. It is belief in progress and in work—the love of, and strong devotion to, humanity, morality and truth for their own sakes—hostility to all social and political distinctions between the rights and privileges of men ; the recognition of the sacredness of personal, political, social and religious freedom, of generous education by government, and of equal opportunities of obtaining labor, and equal pay for equal amounts of labor—deep sympathy for every earnest human effort—the assertion of the duties of free inquiry, and impartial investigation previous to the adoption of opinion—the assertion of the right and duty of free speech—hostility to all cant and hypocrisy—the belief in no duties except those implied by the relation between man and man—and the recognition of a God not anthropomorphic and a dweller in some undiscovered spot outside of the universe, but the sum of all the laws and forces which pervade the universe and every portion of it, and which give life, motion and beauty to all nature.

Towards a religion more or less like this, most of the great freethinkers for the last hundred years have striven. Let this religion be once recognised—let its friends be once dominant, and we shall have no more complaints that Christianity cannot be replaced—no more complaints that society cannot exist without the Bible. The safest basis for morality is to be found in political and social freedom and equality, in thorough and universal popular education, and in pecuniary prosperity, which last indeed must follow the other three. Of all these the freethinkers are and long have been the truest and most zealous friends ; wherever there is a school of freethinkers, there they are fighting in the van of the progressive party for education and freedom. Let it not be supposed that if they obtain power they will turn about and become more conservative than the creed-worshippers, who, as a class, have op-

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

Biblical Miracles. Ch. XVI.

§ 92. "In actual modern life, belief in a supernatural manifestation, an immediate divine agency is at once attributed to ignorance or imposture." *Strauss.*

"Supernatural agency has long since ceased to interfere with human affairs." *George Combe. Constitution of Man.*

"He [Jesus] regarded his miracles as an infallible proof of his doctrine." *Pascal.*

"The first author who stated fairly the connection between the evidence of testimony and the evidence of experience, was Hume in his Essay on Miracles; a work abounding in maxims of great use in the conduct of life." *Edinburgh Review Sept. 1814.*

"It forms a strong presumption against all supernatural and miraculous relations, that they are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations: or if a civilized people has ever given admission to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous ancestors, who transmitted them with that inviolable sanction and authority which always attend received opinions. * * * It is strange, a judicious reader is apt to say, upon the perusal of these wonderful histories, that such prodigious events never happen in our days. But it is nothing strange I hope, that men should lie in all ages." *Hume.*

"An historian ought not to dissemble the difficulty of defining with precision the limits of that happy period, exempt from error and from deceit, to which we might be disposed to extend the gift of supernatural powers. From the first of the fathers to the last of the Popes, a succession of bishops, of saints, of martyrs, and of miracles is continued without interruption; and the progress of superstition was so gradual and almost imperceptible, that we know not in what particular link we should break the chain of tradition." *Gibbon.*

Miraculous Cure by Vespasian.

"Of all the miraculous cures on record, the best attested are those of the blind man and the paralytic man, whom Vespasian cured of their ailments. These miracles were done in Alexandria, before a multitude of people, Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians, and

the Emperor was at the time on his throne. — He did not seek popularity, of which the emperor of Rome, firmly established on his seat, had no need. The two unfortunate men threw themselves in his way, and begged to be cured. He blushed for them and ridiculed their prayer. He said that such a cure was beyond the power of man: but the two unfortunates insisted, and asserted that the god Serapis had appeared to them and assured them that they should be cured by the miraculous power of Vespasian. Finally he consented to utter the words, but he did so without any expectation of success, and on the instant the blind man was restored to see, and the lame man to walk without imperfection. Alexandria, Egypt, and the whole empire were filled with the fame of the event; and the record of the miracles was placed in the archives of State, and preserved in all the contemporary histories. Nevertheless this miracle is now believed by nobody, because nobody has any interest in maintaining it.”—*Voltaire.—Essai sur les Miracles.*

Miracle at Tipasa.

“Tipasa, a maritime colony of Mauritania, was purely orthodox, and had braved the fury of the Donatists and the tyranny of the Arians. Their disobedience exasperated the cruelty of Hunneric; a military count was dispatched from Carthage to Tipasa; he collected the Catholics in the forum, and in the presence of the whole province, deprived the guilty of their right hands and of their tongues. But the holy confessors continued to speak without tongues; and this miracle is attested by Victor, an African bishop, who published a history of the persecution within two years after the event. ‘If any one’ says Victor, ‘should doubt the truth, let him repair to Constantinople, and listen to the clear and perfect language of Restitutus, the sub-deacon, one of these glorious sufferers, who is now lodged in the palace of the Emperor Zeno, and is respected by the devout Empress.’ At Constantinople, we are astonished to find a cool, learned, and unexceptionable witness, without interest and without passion. Æneas of Gaza, a Platonic Philosopher, has accurately described his own observation on these African sufferers: — ‘I saw them myself, I heard them speak, I diligently inquired by what means such an articulate voice could be formed without any organ of speech; I used my eyes to examine the report of my ear; I opened their mouths, and saw that their whole tongues had been completely torn away by the roots—an operation which the physicians generally suppose to be mortal.’ The testimony of Æneas of Gaza might be confirmed by the superfluous evidence of the Emperor Justinian, in a perpetual edict; of Count Marcellinus in his chronicle of the times; and of Pope Gregory the First, who had resided at Constantinople, as the minister of the Roman Pontiff. They all lived within the compass of a century; and they all appeal to their personal knowledge, or to the public notoriety for the

truth of the miracle, which was repeated in several instances, displayed on the greatest theatre of the world, and submitted during a series of years to the calm examination of the senses."—*Gibbon.—Decline and Fall. Ch. XXXVII.*

Miracles at the Tomb of Abbe Paris.

The miracles reported to have been done about 1650. A. D., at the tomb of Abbe Paris, the Jansenist, in the city of Paris, are famous in history. The Rev. Dr. Middleton gives the following account of them :

" Within six years after his [Abbe Paris'] death, the confident report of miracles wrought at his tomb, began to alarm not only the city of Paris, but the whole nation ; while infinite crowds were continually passing to the place and proclaiming the benefits received from the saint, nor could all the power of the government give a check to the rapidity of the superstition, till by closing the tomb within a wall, they effectually obstructed all access to it.

" This expedient though it put an end to the external worship of the saint, could not shake the credit of his miracles ; distinct accounts of which were carefully drawn up, and dispersed among the people, with an attestation of them, much more strong and authentic, than what has ever been alleged for the miracles of any other age since the days of the apostles. Mons. de Montgeron, a person of eminent rank in Paris, (Counsellor to the Parliament), published a select number of them, in a pompous volume in quarto, which he dedicated to the king, and presented to him in person, being induced to the publication of them, as he declares, by the incontestible evidence of the facts ; by which he himself, a libertine and professed deist, became a sincere convert to the Christian faith. But, besides the collection of M. de Montgeron, several other collections were made containing in the whole above a hundred miracles, which are all published together in three volumes, with their original vouchers, certificates, affidavits and letters annexed to each of them at full length.

" The greatest part of these miracles were employed in the cure of desperate diseases in their last and deplored state, and after all human remedies had for many years been tried upon them in vain ; but the patients no sooner addressed themselves to the tomb of this saint, than the most inveterate cases, and complications of palsies, apoplexies, and dropsies, and even blindness and lameness, &c., were either instantly cured or greatly relieved, and within a short time after wholly removed. All which cures were performed in the church-yard of St. Medard, in the open view of the people, and with so general a belief of the finger of God in them that many infidels, debauchees, schismatics, and heretics are said to have been converted by them to the Catholic faith. And the reality of them is attested by some of the principal physicians and surgeons in

France, as well as the clergy of the first dignity, several of whom were eye-witnesses of them, who presented a *verbal process* (*proces-verbal*) to each of the archbishops, with a petition signed by about twenty *cures* or rectors of the parishes of Paris, desiring that they might be authentically registered, and solemnly published to the people as true miracles."

On the wall erected, about the tomb to keep away the crowd and stop the miracles, some scoffer posted up the following epigram—

‘ De par le Roi, defense a Dieu,
De faire miracles dans ce lieu.’

(By order of the king, God is forbidden to work miracles in this place.)

Miraculous Cure of Pascal's Niece.

“ Mademoiselle Perrier was a niece of Blaize Pascal. She was a child in her eleventh year, and a scholar residing in the monastery of Port Royal. For three years and a half she had been afflicted with a *fistula lachrymalis*. The adjacent bones had become carious, and the most loathsome ulcers disfigured her countenance. All remedies had been tried in vain; the medical faculty had exhausted their resources. * * * Now it came to pass that M. de la Potherie, a Parisian ecclesiastic, and an assiduous collector of relics, had possessed himself of one of the thorns from the crown worn by Christ just previous to the crucifixion. Great had been the curiosity of the various convents to see it, and the ladies of Port Royal had earnestly solicited the privilege. Accordingly on the 24th of March, in the year 1656, a solemn procession of nuns, novices and scholars moved along the aisles of the monastic church, chanting appropriate hymns, and each one in her turn kissing the holy relic. When the turn of Mademoiselle Perrier arrived, she, by the advice of the school-mistress, touched her diseased eye with the thorn, not doubting but that it would effect a cure. She regained her room and her malady was gone. The cure was instantaneous and complete. * * * All Paris rang with the story. It reached the ear of the Queen Mother. By her command M. Felix, the principal surgeon to the king, investigated and confirmed the narrative. * * * The greatest genius, the most profound scholar, and the most eminent advocate of that age, all possessing the most ample means of knowledge, all carefully investigated, all admitted, and all defended with their pens, the miracle of the Holy Thorn. Europe, at that time, produced no three men more profoundly conversant with the laws of the material world, with the laws of the human mind, and with the municipal law, than Pascal, Arnauld and Le Maitre; and they were all sincere and earnest believers. Yet our Protestant incredulity utterly rejects both the tale itself and the inferences drawn from it, and but for such

mighty names might yield to the temptation of regarding it as too contemptible for serious notice."—*Edinburgh Review*, July 1841.

The De Retz Miracle.

"There is also a memorable story, related by Cardinal De Retz, (in his Memoirs) which may well deserve our consideration. When that intriguing politician fled into Spain to avoid the persecution of his enemies, he passed through Saragossa, the capital of Aragon, where he was shewn in the cathedral a man, who had served seven years as a doorkeeper, and was well known to everybody in town that had ever paid his devotions at that church. He had been seen for so long a time wanting a leg, but recovered that limb by the rubbing of holy oil upon the stump : and the Cardinal assures us, that he saw him with two legs. This miracle was vouched by all the canons of the church ; and the whole company in town were appealed to for a confirmation of the fact, whom the Cardinal found, by their zealous devotion, to be thorough believers of the miracle. Here the relater was also contemporary to the supposed prodigy, of an incredulous and libertine character, as well as of great genius ; the miracle of so singular a nature as could scarcely admit of a counterfeit, and the witnesses very numerous, and all of them, in a manner, spectators of the fact, to which they gave their testimony. And what adds mightily to the force of this evidence, and may double our surprise on this occasion, is that the Cardinal himself, who relates the story, seems not to give any credit to it, and consequently cannot be suspected of any concurrence in the holy fraud. He considered justly that it was not requisite, in order to reject a fact of this nature, to be able accurately to disprove the testimony, and to trace its falsehood through all the circumstances of knavery and credulity which produced it. He knew that as this was commonly altogether impossible, at any small distance of place, so it was extremely difficult, even where one was immediately present, by reason of the bigotry, ignorance, cunning and roguery of a great portion of mankind. He therefore concluded, like a just reasoner, that such an evidence carried falsehood on the very face of it, and that a miracle, supported by any human testimony, was more properly a subject of derision than of argument."—*Hume*.

"The monks of succeeding [the dark] ages, who in their peaceful solitudes, entertained themselves with diversifying the deaths and sufferings of the primitive martyrs, have frequently invented torments of a very refined and ingenious nature. In particular it has pleased them to suppose that the zeal of the Roman magistrates, disdaining every consideration of moral virtue or public decency, endeavored to seduce those whom they could not vanquish, and that by their orders the most brutal violence was offered to those whom they found it impossible to seduce. It is related that

pious females who were prepared to despise death, were sometimes condemned to a more severe trial, and called upon to determine whether they set a higher value on their religion or their chastity. The youths to whose licentious embraces they were abandoned, received a solemn exhortation from the judge, to exert their most strenuous efforts to maintain the honor of Venus against the impious virgin who refused to burn incense on her altars. Their violence, however, was commonly disappointed, and the seasonable interposition of some miraculous power preserved the chaste spouses of Christ from the dishonor even of an involuntary defeat.”—*Gibbon*.

Miracles of Spiritualism.

The wonders of American Spiritualism are no less miraculous than the alleged miracles of Jesus ; and are attested by an infinitely greater amount of testimony. Among these Spiritualistic wonders are inexplicable rappings, moving of tables and other articles of furniture, without the influence of any discoverable physical agency ; the playing of tunes upon guitars and pianos in like mysterious manner ; the speaking of many foreign tongues by persons, who, in their normal condition, understand only their own ; the knowledge of the thoughts of other persons ; the power of discovering things hidden to the ordinary senses, etc. Among the living witnesses who are mentioned in the books of the Spiritualists as being able to testify to various of these wonders, I find the names of N. P. Tallmadge and James F. Simmons, ex-members of the U.S. Senate; E. D. Culver, Waddy Thompson, and H. P. Hascall, ex-members of the U. S. House of Representatives ; James Hamilton, ex-Governor of South Carolina ; John W. Edmonds, ex-Judge of the Supreme Court of New York ; John G. Whittier ; Fennimore Cooper ; Judge Charles H. Larrabee, of Wisconsin ; Judge Willie P. Fowler, of Kentucky ; Judge R. P. Spaulding, of Ohio, and innumerable others. To this list I might add the names of many honest and intelligent persons of my own acquaintance.

Miracles of Witchcraft.

“There is far more testimony to prove the fact of miracles, witchcraft, and diabolical possession, in times comparatively modern, than to prove the Christian miracles. It is well known that the most credible writers among the early Christians, Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, Chrysostom, Jerome, Theodoret, and others, believed that the miraculous power continued in great vigor in their time. But to come down still later, the case of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, is more to the point. He lived in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. His life has been written in part by William, Abbot of St. Thierry, Ernald, Abbot of Bonnevaux, and Geoffry, Abbot of Igny, “all-eye-witnesses of the Saint’s actions.” Another life was written by Alanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and still another by

John the Hermit, not long after the death of Bernard, both his contemporaries. Besides, there are three books on his miracles, one by Philip of Clairvaux, another by the monks of that place, and a third by the above-mentioned Geoffrey. He cures the deaf, the dumb, the lame, the blind. men possessed with devils, in many cases before multitudes of people. He wrought thirty-six miracles in a single day, says one of his historians ; converted men and women that could not understand the language he spoke in. His wonders are set down by the eye-witnesses themselves, men known to us by the testimony of others. I do not hesitate in saying that there is far more evidence to support the miracles of St. Bernard, than those mentioned in the New Testament.

“ But we are to accept such testimony with great caution. The tendency of men to believe the thing happens which they expect to happen—the tendency of rumor to exaggerate a real occurrence into a surprising or miraculous affair, is well known. A century and a half have not gone by since witches were tried by a special court in Massachusetts, convicted by a jury of twelve good men and true, preached against by the clergy, and executed by the common hangman. Any one who looks carefully into the matter, sees more evidence for the reality of these ‘ wonders of the invisible world,’ than for the Christian miracles. Here is the testimony of scholars, clergymen, witnesses examined under oath, jurymen and judges ; the confession of honest men ; of persons whose character is well known at the present day, to prove the reality of witchcraft, and the actual occurrence of miraculous facts ; of the interference of powers more than human in the affairs of man. The appearance of the Devil ‘ as a little black man,’ of spectres and ghosts, the power of witches to ride through the air, overturn a ship, raise storms, and torture men at a distance, is attested by a cloud of witnesses, perfectly overshadowing to a man of easy faith. In the celebrated case of Richard Dugdale, the ‘ Surey Demoniac,’ or ‘ Surey Impostor’—which occurred in the latter part of the seventeenth century, in England, and was a most notorious affair—we have the testimony of nine dissenting clergymen, to prove his diabolical miracles, all of them familiar with the ‘ Demoniac,’—and also the depositions of many credible persons, sworn to before two magistrates, to confirm the wonder.” *Parker.*”

Miracles are “ operations contrary to the fixed and established laws of nature.” *Locke.*

“ In those days [50 A. D.] among that people [the Jews] miracles were so much in course, that without a reasonable number of them, a history would hardly have obtained credence ; at any rate it would not have obtained readers, and without readers, no history can ever obtain much credence.”

“ I am the better pleased with the method of reasoning here de-

livered, as I think it may serve to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies to the Christian religion, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason : our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason ; and it is a sure method of exposing it, to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure. To make this more evident, let us examine those miracles related in Scripture ; and not to lose ourselves in too wide a field, let us confine ourselves to such as we find in the Pentateuch, which we shall examine according to the principles of these pretended Christians, not as the word or testimony of God himself, but as the production of a mere human writer and historian. Here then we are first to consider a book presented to us by a barbarous and ignorant people, written in an age when they were still more barbarous, and in all probability long after the facts which it relates, corroborated by no concurring testimony, and resembling those fabulous accounts which every nation gives of its origin. Upon reading this book we find it full of prodigies and miracles. It gives an account of the state of the world and of human nature entirely different from the present, of our fall from that state, of the age of man extending to near a thousand years, of the destruction of the world by a deluge, of the arbitrary choice of one people as the favorites of Heaven—and that people the countrymen of the author—and of their deliverance from bondage by prodigies the most astonishing imaginable. I desire any one to lay his hand upon his heart, and after a serious consideration, declare whether he thinks that the falsehood of such a book, supported by such testimony, would be more extraordinary and miraculous than all the miracles it relates ; which is however necessary to make it be received according to the measures of probability. What we have said of miracles may be applied without any variation to prophecies : and indeed all prophecies are real miracles, and as such only can be admitted as proof of any revelation. If it did not exceed the capacity of human nature to foretell human events, it would be absurd to employ any prophecy as argument for a divine mission or authority from Heaven. So, that upon the whole, we may conclude that the Christian religion was not only at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one.”—*Hume's Essay on Miracles*.

“ It does not appear that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were common in the church for more than two or three centuries. We seldom hear of them after that fatal period when the Emperor Constantine called himself a Christian ; and from a vain imagination of promoting the Christian cause thereby, heaped riches, and power, and honor, upon the Christians in general ; but, in particular, upon the Christian clergy. From this time they almost totally ceased ; very few instances of the kind were found. The cause

of this was not (as has been vulgarly supposed, 'because there was no more occasion for them,' because all the world had become Christians. This is a miserable mistake; not a twentieth part of it was then nominally Christian. The real cause was, 'the love of many,' almost of all Christians, so called, was 'waxed cold.' The Christians had no more the Spirit of Christ than the other Heathens. The Son of Man when he came to examine his church, could hardly find faith upon the earth."—*John Wesley, 94th Sermon.*

Rousseau on Miracles.

"MAN. 'Apostle of truth, what have you to say to me of which my reason cannot judge?'

PRIEST. 'God himself has spoken. Listen to his revelation.'

M. 'That is another matter. God has spoken! The word is a great one. And to whom did he speak? Why have I heard nothing of his voice?'

P. 'He has commissioned other men to bear a message to you.'

M. 'I understand: these are men who come to tell me what God has told them. I should prefer that he had spoken to me immediately: it would have given him no trouble, and would have protected me from deception.'

P. 'He does protect you, by giving proof of the divine authority of his ministers.'

M. 'How?'

P. 'By miracles.'

M. 'Where are these miracles?'

P. 'They are recorded in books.'

M. 'And who made the books?'

P. 'Men.'

M. 'And who saw the miracles?'

P. 'The men who bear witness to them.'

M. 'What, always human testimony! Always men who report to me what other men have reported! How many men between God and me! However, let me see, examine, compare, verify. O, if God had spared me this labor, would I have served him with less zeal?'

"Consider, my friend, in what a horrible discussion I am here engaged; what immense learning is necessary for my ascent into the most remote antiquity, to examine, weigh, compare the prophecies, the revelations, the facts, all the monuments of faith offered in all the countries of the world, to know their dates, places, authors and occasions of their origin! What nicety of criticism is necessary to distinguish the genuine from the spurious documents, to compare the translations with the originals, the objections with the replies: to judge of the impartiality, the intelligence and the general reliability of witnesses; to know whether anything has been suppressed, added, transposed, changed or falsified; and to explain the contra-

dictions. * * The monuments being admitted to be genuine, it will be necessary to pass to the testimony of the mission of the authors ; it will be necessary to understand the law of probabilities, to know what prediction may be fulfilled without a miracle ; to understand the genius of the oriental languages, so as to be able to distinguish predictions from oratorical figures ; to comprehend the laws of Nature and know what are natural events and what are not ; to know how far an adroit man may blind the eyes of the ignorant and astonish those of the intelligent ; to study what kind of a prodigy should command belief, and when the proof would become so strong that its rejection would deserve punishment ; to compare the testimony of true and false miracles and find certain methods of distinguishing between them ; and finally to understand why God, for the purpose of attesting his word, should resorted to proof which itself requires to be proved, as if he were playing with the credulity of men, and intentionally neglected the only proper means of convincing them." *Emile.*

R. W. Mackay on Miracles.

"Miracles die out when they approach the confines of civilization ; and the duration of human life and the general course of nature, fall into the routine of common experience. Phenomena, which before appeared arbitrary acts of power, assume, when connected and compared, an intelligible aspect as orderly results of law. Seeming exceptions to the usual succession of events are rarely seen, and their exceptional character is at once felt to be only apparent and deceptive. Men have never yet attained, and believe to be unattainable, that absolute and exhaustive knowledge of physical causes, which would be necessary for the satisfactory attestation of miracle. Miracle, as it must now be understood, implies something inconsistent with the order of a perfect government, something overlooked in the original plan, requiring an interpolation contrary to its general tenor. This contradiction was never contemplated by the ancients. Their imaginations were excited, by what was strange, to look to a divine agent ; but it was precisely from the defective notions of the order of the whole, that they recognized a peculiar divinity in the exceptional. * * A perfect and immutable being cannot break his own laws, or be at variance with himself ; his power is only commensurate with his will ; he cannot, because he will not, do that which would be inconsistent, prejudicial and unjust. And why should the order of nature be disturbed for the sake of those who, submitting the understanding to the eye, and demanding signs or wonders as an indispensable condition of belief, may discover them abundantly in the uncomprehended order of natural events ? Why derange a machinery so vast, so perfect in its connection, and so infinite in its relations, in order to effect a doubtful surprise or obscure conviction among

the most ignorant of mankind, whose authority as witnesses must ever, from the imperfection of their knowledge, be open to exception, and remain insufficient to transfer the impressions at first received through the long series of skeptical generations? It is not incredible that God can raise the dead, for his ability to do so is abundantly evident in nature; it is incredible only that he should do so, in a manner inconsistent with his own eternal laws; and it would have been no irrational inference which should have ascribed an admitted infraction of those laws to Beelzebub, to demoniacal influence instead of divine. * * But the hypothesis of miracle has lost its usefulness, as well as a large share of its popularity. It no longer promotes a spirit of piety when God is rather studied in the known, than guessed at through the unknown, when the ordinary and regular is acknowledged to be more truly divine than the strange and accidental. Addressed to the ignorant and unthinking, it produces no permanent conviction of comprehensive beneficence and wisdom. It substitutes disarrangement and anarchy for certainty and order. Uninstructive, because defying all comparison and analogy, it leads to no useful lesson but that which is better proved without its assistance. It is no more necessary to the present support of Christianity, than those usages of the ceremonial law discarded at its outset. A belief in the miraculous, or Messianic character of Jesus, was in his own day the most decisive test of superiority to vulgar prejudice, and of a disposition to conform to the spiritualism of Christianity; now circumstances are reversed, for, by a strange misapprehension of the nature and objects of faith, the weightier matters of charity and justice are deprived of their due preponderance, and made secondary to a blind belief in the supernatural and mystical. But belief in miracle is worse than useless; it creates false notions of God's nature and government; it arms the imagination against the reason; it discourages the cultivation of the intellect, and darkens the path of duty. It demoralizes, by superseding prudential care, and the feeling of immediate responsibility. It removes God from the world, and brings him back again only by a convulsive start of superstitious amazement. The supposition of a partial and capricious government of nature, has much the same effect as if it were unhappily realized. When Ulysses ascribed to God the effects of his own negligence in forgetting his cloak, or when Ajax considered his falling on slippery ground to be the injurious act of Minerva, the real causes of these mischances would probably be unheeded and uncorrected."—*Progress of the Intellect*. I. 6.

Biblical Prophecies—Ch. XVII.

§ 95. If there be any genuine prophecies in the Bible, there are many recorded outside of it, much more wonderful, and much better attested.

Cazotte's Prophecy of the French Revolution.

The most wonderful prediction of which record has been made, and to which credit has been given to by modern writers of high enlightenment and of unquestioned honesty, is that of the French Revolution by M. Cazotte. The principal record is that of La Harpe, a learned and upright man, who had been a Christian for many years before his death. The record was found, in his own handwriting, among his papers, after his death, and it was published in his *Posthumous Memoirs* (Paris. 1806, vol. I. p. 62). The following is a translation :—

“ It seems to me, as though it had occurred yesterday, but it was in the beginning of 1788. We were at the table of a fellow-member of the Academy, a prominent and talented man. The company was large, and composed of persons of many different stations in life—courtiers, judges, learned men, academicians, etc. They had, as usual, enjoyed the pleasures of a well-set table. After the substantial part of the meal had been finished, the Malvoisier and the Cape wine contributed to heighten the jollity, and increased that kind of free-spirit which does not always observe any certain limits.

“ The state of society permitted the utterance of anything which might contribute to raise a laugh. Chamfort had read to us from his impious and obscene stories, and the noble ladies listened without even using their fans to hide their faces. Then came a flood of satirical remarks, ridiculing religion. One quoted a passage from the *Pucelle* ; another called up that verse of Diderot, wherein he praises the time when the last king shall be hung with an intestine of the last priest ; and all clapped applause. Another arose, with a full glass in his hand, and speaking loudly, said, ‘ Yes, gentlemen, I am as certain that there is no God, as I am certain that Homer was a fool ! ’ And, indeed, he was as certain of the truth of the one statement as of the other. God and Homer had been the subjects of conversation a short time before, and there were persons present who had spoken well of both.

“ The conversation became more serious. The company spoke with astonishment of the revolution which Voltaire had effected, and all agreed that it was the chief foundation of his glory. He had given character to his century ; he had written so that he was read by the poor as well as the rich. One of the guests related, amidst great laughter, that his hair-dresser, while powdering him, said, ‘ Indeed, sir, though I am only a poor barber, I have no more religion than others.’ The general opinion was that the revolution would soon be complete, and that superstition and fanaticism would have to give place entirely to philosophy ; and they calculated the time which would probably be required for the completion of the revolution, and speculated as to who of the company should have the happiness to see the reign of reason. The elder ones regretted that they could not expect it. The younger ones rejoiced in hopeful

probability that they should see it ; and especial honor was done to the Academy, for laying the foundation of the great work, by being the central home, the focus, and the spur of free-thought.

“ One only of the guests had taken no part in all these joyous amusements, and had even thrown in slyly, here and there, a satirical remark, aimed at our beautiful enthusiasm. That one was M. Cazotte, an estimable and original man, who, however, was, unfortunately, a follower of the dreams of those believing in a higher light than reason. He now spoke in an earnest manner, ‘ Gentlemen, congratulate yourselves : you all shall witness that great and sublime revolution which you so much wish to see. . You know that I have paid some attention to prophecy : I repeat it to you : you shall witness the revolution.’

“ No prophetic gift is necessary to foresee that,” remarked one.

‘ That is true ’ replied he ‘ but the case may be different with something more that I have to say to you. . Do you know what will be the result of this revolution, wherein reason is to be the antagonist of revealed religion—what will be its consequence for you, who are here present?—what will be its immediate, undesirable and recognised influence ?’

‘ Let us see ’ said Condorcet on his simple way ‘ it does a philosopher good to meet a prophet.’

‘ You Monsieur Condorcet,’ continued Cazotte ‘ you, lying stretched out on the floor of an underground prison, will die by poison administered by your own hand to save yourself from the executioner—poison which you will be compelled, by the happiness of that time, to carry with you constantly.’

This language caused great astonishment at first, but the company remembered that Cazotte was given to dreaming dreams, and presently broke out into loud laughter. ‘ Monsieur Cazotte ’ said one of the guests, ‘ that story is not so amusing as your *Devil in Love* (*Le Diable Amoureux* was the title of a witty novelette by Cazotte). What the deuce has inspired you with these thoughts of the prison, poison, and the executioner ? What have they to do with philosophy and the reign of reason ?’

‘ That is precisely what I say ’ answered Cazotte. ‘ In the name of Philosophy, in the name of Humanity, and of Freedom, under Reason, it will happen that you shall come to such an end ; and then reason will certainly reign, for she will have temples ; yes, in all France there will then be no other temples than those of reason.’

‘ Verily, said Chamfort with a scornful smile, ‘ you will not be one of the priests in those temples.’

‘ I hope not ’ replied Cazotte ; ‘ but you Monsieur de Chamfort, will be one of those priests, and worthy of the position, you will

open your veins by twenty-two cuts with the razor, and yet will not die till several months afterwards.'

The company looked and laughed.

Cazotte continued 'You Monsieur Vicq d'Azyr, you will not open your veins yourself; but in a fit of gout, you will have them opened six times, to be more certain of the thing, and you will die in the night.'

'You, Monsieur Nicolai, will die upon the scaffold!'

'You Monsieur Bailly, upon the scaffold.'

'You, Monsieur de Malesherbes, upon the scaffold!'

'God be praised!' said Monsieur Roucher, 'it appears that Monsieur Cazotte is only going to dispose of the Academy: he has made a horrible butchery among them: as for me, Heaven be praised—'

'Cazotte interrupted him, 'You?—you will die on the scaffold!'

'Ha! this is a butchery,' they called out on all sides; 'he has sworn to exterminate us!'

He replied 'No! I have sworn no such thing!'

The company said—'Then we are to be subjugated by the Turks and Tartars? and then.'

He answered—'By no means: I have already told you that you would then be under the government of philosophy and reason: they who shall treat you in that manner shall be all philosophers; they shall speak only in such phrases as you have been using for the last hour, will repeat all your maxims, like you will put forward the verses of the *Pucelle* and Diderot!'

The company began to whisper to each other 'You see he's crazy'—(for he remained very serious all this time)—'Do you not see, he's joking!—' And you know he mixes some wonderful stuff in all his jokes!' 'But' said Chamfort 'I must confess his wonderful stuff is not amusing: it smacks too much of the gallows! And when is all this to come to pass?'

Cazotte replied 'Before six years shall have passed, everything that I have said will be fulfilled!'

'There are many wonders' said I [LaHarpe] 'but you say nothing of me?'

'To you,' said Cazotte 'a wonder shall happen not less extraordinary: you will be a Christian!'

Here there was a general outcry, 'I am quieted,' said Chamfort, 'if death comes to us only when LaHarpe turns Christian, we shall live for ever!'

'We women,' said then the Dutchess of Grammont, 'are fortunate, that we are counted as nothing in the revolutions. When I say *as nothing*, I mean that we shall be concerned only a little; but little attention is paid to us.'

CAZOTTE. 'Ladies, your sex will on this occasion not protect

you, and you may mix in *nothing* as much as you please : you will be treated like the men, and no difference will be made for your sex.'

THE DUTCHESS. 'Why, Monsieur Cazotte, what are you talking about? Are you preaching the end of the world?'

CAZOTTE. 'I do not know about that; but what I do know, is that you, *Madame la Duchesse*, will be borne to the scaffold,—you and many ladies with you—upon the hangman's cart, with your hands bound behind you!'

THE DUTCHESS. 'In such case, I hope to have a coach covered with mourning.'

CAZOTTE. 'No, madam! Ladies of higher rank than yourself will be borne on the hangman's cart, with their hands tied at their backs.'

THE DUTCHESS. 'Of higher rank?—How?—Princesses of the Blood Royal?'

CAZOTTE. 'Yet higher!'

There was now a perceptible commotion in the company, and the host began to frown; it was plain that the joke was carried too far. Madame de Grammont, to dissipate the cloud, allowed his last remark to go without an answer, and contented herself with saying in a joking manner, 'You will see that he will not ever leave me the consolation of a confessor.'

CAZOTTE. 'No, Madame! You nor no one else shall have any! The last victim, who for mercy, shall be allowed a confessor, will be ——' Here he hesitated.

THE DUTCHESS. 'Well, who is then the happy one, to whom this happy privilege will be granted?'

CAZOTTE. 'It will be the only privilege granted him; and he will be the King of France!'

The host now rose hastily from the table, and every one with him. He went to Cazotte, and said to him, in an excited manner, 'My dear Monsieur Cazotte, this mournful joke has lasted too long. You carry it too far, and to such a degree, that you expose yourself and the whole company to danger!'

Cazotte did not reply, but started to go away; but Madame de Grammont, who was determined to prevent the thing from being taken seriously, if she could restore the jollity, went to him and said, 'Now, sir prophet, you have foretold something for us all, but of your own fate, you say nothing?'

He was silent, cast down his eyes, and then spoke, 'Madame, have you read in Josephus the history of the Siege of Jerusalem?'

THE DUTCHESS. 'Certainly! who has not read it? But you speak as though you supposed I had not read it!'

"Well, madame, during that siege, a man went about the walls of the city for seven consecutive days, in the view of the besiegers and besieged, and cried out constant^{ly}, with a mournful voice, 'Woe

to Jerusalem! Woe to Jerusalem!' and on the seventh day he cried out, 'Woe to Jerusalem! and Woe to me!' and at that instant, an immense stone, thrown by the machines of the enemy, crushed him.

"After these words, Monsieur Cazotte made his bow and went away."

So far La Harpe. Of course such testimony, that of a dead man, who cannot be cross-examined, taken alone, cannot suffice to prove such a wonderful statement. But we find some singular testimony in corroboration. Jung Stilling, whose honesty and intelligence will not be denied by any person of learning, writing within twenty-five years after the date of the alleged prophecy, says (*Geisterkunde*, § 149) "I can prove that the story is literally true in letter and in spirit. I have spoken with a gentleman of rank, very trustworthy, who knew Cazotte well, and had spoken with him about the prediction. This gentlemen assured me that Cazotte was a very pious and very learned man, who often made the most wonderful predictions which were always verified by the event."

M. le Comte A. de Montesquieu having heard Madame de Genlis say that she had heard La Harpe speak of Cazotte's prediction, requested her for more details. She wrote—

"NOVEMBER 1825.

I think I have somewhere placed among my souvenirs the anecdote of M. Cazotte, but I am not sure. I have heard it related a hundred times by M. de Le Harpe before the revolution and always in the same form as I have read it in print, and as he himself has caused it to be printed. This is all that I can say, or certify, or authenticate by my signature.

COMTESSE de GENLIS."

M. le Baron Delamothe Langon wrote to M. Mialle.

"You inquire of me, my dear friend, what I know concerning the famous prediction of Cazotte, mentioned by La Harpe. I have only on this subject to assure you on my honor, that I have heard Madame la Comtesse de Beauharnais many times assert that she was present at this very singular historical fact. She related it always in the same way, and with the accent of truth: her evidence fully corroborated that of La Harpe. She spoke thus before all the persons of the society in which she moved, many of whom still live, and could equally attest this assertion. * * *

BARON DELAMOTHE LANGON.

PARIS Dec. 18th. 1833."

Lacretelle in his *Histoire de la Revolution Francaise* relates the circumstances of the death of Cazotte by the guillotine. He met death most composedly—slept soundly shortly before the hour fixed for his execution. At the foot of the scaffold he said "I die as I have lived—true to my God and my country." His daughter was attached to him with the most heroic devotion and once saved his

life by insisting that the executioners should slay her first : and as she was only seventeen years of age, they spared her father for her sake. Lacretelle says Cazotte “author of several agreeable [literary] productions, beloved in society for the uprightness [*loyauté*] of his character, and his lively wit, had given himself in his old age to a religious exaltation so ardent that he believed himself to receive revelations from heaven. The horrors of a revolution were present to his mind long before it broke out. Many philosophers, if the singular recital of La Harpe is to be believed, had reason to remember Cazotte when death came upon them : for he had foretold how each one should die, and he predicted also his own sad end.”

La Harpe's story has been received with credit and published as true by Stilling in his *Geisterkunde*, Gregory in his *Letters on Animal Magnetism*, and H. G. Atkinson and Harriet Martineau in their letters on *Man's Nature and Development*.

Prophecy of Josephine's Greatness.

Memes, in his biography of the Empress Josephine, thus records the famous prophecy of Josephine's royal destiny : “On one of these occasions, an incident occurred, the only one recorded of her early years, which exercised an influence, at least over her imagination, almost to the latest hour of her existence. The following is the narrative, in her own words, as she long afterwards related the circumstances to the ladies of her court :—

“One day, some time before my first marriage, while taking my usual walk, I observed a number of negro girls assembled round an old woman, engaged in telling their fortunes. I drew near to observe their proceedings. The old Sibyl, on beholding me, uttered a loud exclamation, and almost by force seized my hand. She appeared to be under the greatest agitation. Amused at these absurdities, as I thought them, I allowed her to proceed, saying, ‘So you discover something extraordinary in my destiny?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Is happiness or misfortune to be my lot?’ ‘Misfortune. Ah, stop! and happiness too.’ ‘You take care not to commit yourself, my dame; your oracles are not the most intelligible.’ ‘I am not permitted to render them more clear’, said the woman, raising her eyes with a mysterious expression towards heaven. ‘But to the point’, replied I, for my curiosity began to be excited; ‘what read you concerning me in futurity?’ ‘What do I see in the future? You will not believe me, if I speak.’ ‘Yes, indeed, I assure you. Come, my good mother, what am I to fear and hope?’ ‘On your own head be it then; listen! You will be married soon; that union will not be happy; you will become a widow, and then—then you will be Queen of France! Some happy years will be yours; but you will die in a hospital, amid civil commotion.’”

In regard to this prophecy, Alison, in his history of Uurope,

says, "The history of Josephine had been very remarkable. She was born in the West Indies : and it had early been prophesied by an old negress, that she should lose her first husband, be extremely unfortunate, but that she should afterwards be greater than a queen. This prophecy, the authenticity of which is placed beyond a doubt, was fulfilled in the most singular manner. Her first husband, Alexander Beauharnois, a general in the army of the Rhine, had been guillotined, during the Reign of Terror : and she herself, who was also imprisoned at the same time, was only saved from impending death by the fall of Robespierre. So strongly was the prophecy impressed on her mind, that, while lying in the dungeons of the Conciergerie, expecting every hour to be summoned to the Revolutionary Tribunal, she mentioned it to her fellow-prisoners, and to amuse them, named some of them as ladies of the bedchamber ; a jest which she afterwards lived to realize to one of their number."

Alison adds in a note, "The author heard of this prophecy long before Napoleon's elevation to the throne, from the late Countess of Bath and the Countess of Ancram, who were educated in the same convent with Josephine, and had repeatedly heard her mention the circumstance in early youth."

"A prophetic pamphlet, published in 1651, by the famous astrologer Lilly, was thought to be so signally verified by the great fire of London, that the author was summoned before the House of Commons, and publicly requested there to favor them with his advice respecting the prospects of the nation."—*Edinburgh Review*, July, 1844.

Seneca in his *Medea* foretold the discovery of a western continent.

Berkeley's verses on America are more truly prophetic, than anything in the Bible.

Forbes, in his *Oriental Memoirs* (Vol. II. Ch. IV), gives an account of several wonderful Hindoo prophecies, which were verified by the event.

Mrs. Mowatt, now Mrs. Ritchie, states in her *Autobiography*, that when in Mesmeric trance (into which she was thrown during illness), she prophesied, truly and accurately, the times when she would be well and ill.

"The same prophecies frequently have a double meaning, and refer to different events, the one near, the other remote : the one temporal, the other spiritual or perhaps eternal."—*Horne. Introduction*.

Biblical Books not Genuine.—Ch. XXI.

"Moses wrote his book, the section concerning Balaam and *Job*. Joshua wrote his book and eight verses which are in the law. Samuel wrote his book, *Judges* and *Ruth*. David wrote his book

with the assistance of ten of the elders, Adam, Melchisedec, Abraham, Moses, Heman, Jeduthan, Asaph, and the three sons of Korah. Jeremiah wrote his book, the book of *Kings* and the *Lamentations*. Hezekiah [King of Judah] with his ministers wrote the prophecies of Isaiah, the *Proverbs*, the *Canticle*, and *Ecclesiastics*. The men of the Great Synagogue wrote *Ezekiel*, the twelve minor prophets, *Daniel* and *Esther*. Ezra wrote his book and the *Chronicles*.”—*Talmud as quoted by Norton*.

“ One circumstance which distinguishes this part of the historical Scriptures [the beginning of Genesis] from all others is the disjointed, and if we may so say, fragmentary character which belongs to the different passages of history ; and it is singular that it should have been left for very recent times to make the observation, the truth of which is immediately evident to every reader whose attention has once been drawn to the subject, that the first portion of *Genesis* consists of several distinct and separate documents, which have been compiled or rather copied continuously and without alteration, and set down with their original titles even prefixed to each in the proemium to the Old Testament. The compiler appears to have been particularly careful to preserve each original document in its integrity without introducing even such verbal alterations as might have served to give the appearance of unity of composition. The principal of these documents are the following :

1. The Cosmogony. *Gen. I. 1—II. 3.*
2. Generations of the heaven and earth. *Gen. II. 4—III. 24.*
3. History of Cain, Abel and Seth ; and genealogy of Cain's descendants.
4. The genealogies from Adam to Noah.
5. History of the sons of God or giants.
6. History of Noah and the deluge. *Gen. VI.—IX. 29.*
7. Genealogy of the sons of Noah, with a brief history of the nations descended from them. *Gen. X.*
8. History of Babel. *Gen. XI. 1—9.*
9. Genealogies from Shem to Abraham.
10. Genealogy of Terah. *Gen. XI. 27—32. Prichard, Phys. Hist. Note on Bib. Chronology.*

“ I consider the evidence conclusive, particularly since the learned investigations of Ewald, who has heaped up the proof in excess, that the first general compilation of the Old Testament Scriptures was made, in no case before, but probably after the bloom-season of Hebrew poetry under the early kings, but at the same time, that some portions of the *Pentateuch*, such as the list of camping places in the wilderness. and some others may well have been composed in the time of Moses.”—*Lepsius. Chronologie der Ägypter.*

The unreliable character of national traditions, even when illustrated by customs, and even monuments, has a striking example in the Athenian tradition of the Amazonian invasion.

"This injury, they [the Amazons] avenged by invading Attica—an undertaking neither 'trifling or feminine.' They penetrated even into Athens itself, where the final battle, hard fought, and at one time doubtful, by which Theseus crushed them, was fought in the very heart of the city. Attic antiquaries confidently pointed out the exact position of the two contending armies: the left wing of the Amazons rested upon the spot occupied by the commemorative monument of the Amazoneion; the right wing touched the Pnyx, the place in which the public assemblages of the Athenian democracy were held. The details and fluctuations of the combat, as well as the final triumph and consequent truce, were recounted by these authors, with as complete faith, and as much circumstantiality as those of the battle of Plataea by Herodotus. No portion of the ante-historical epic appears to have been more deeply worked into the national mind of Greece than this invasion and defeat of the Amazons. It was not only a constant theme of the logographers, but was also constantly appealed to by the popular orators along with Marathon and Salamis, among those antique exploits of which their fellow-citizens might be justly proud. It formed a part of the retrospective faith of Herodotus, Lysias, Plato, and Isokrates, and the exact date of the event was settled by the chronologists."—*Grote's Greece*.

An orthodox friend of F. W. Newman admitted that Genesis was made up of older writings, "and regarded it as a high recommendation of the book that it was conscientiously made out of pre-existing materials, and was not a fancy that came from the brain of Moses."

"It is probable it [the Jewish canon] comprehended all the remains of the ancient literature of the nation"—*Norton*.

"I have long thought that the greater part of the book of *Daniel* is most certainly a very late work, of the time of the Maccabees; and the pretended prophecy of the Kings of Greece and Persia, and of the North and South, is mere history, like the poetical prophecies in Virgil and elsewhere. In fact, you can distinctly trace the date when it was written, because the events up to that date are given with historical minuteness, totally unlike the character of real prophecy, and beyond that date all is imaginary." *Arnold*.

The Epistle of Paul to the *Hebrews* was looked upon with great doubt for a long time by the early churches, and was not universally received as genuine till about 300 A. D. De Wette thinks it spurious. He says that the style is entirely different from that of

the majority of the Epistles, admitted to be genuine, being purer Greek, and more elegant. The writer was apparently ignorant of the Old Testament in Hebrew, and there are several passages which Paul would scarcely have written, if, indeed, he would have written at all to a Jewish congregation, where other apostles were the leaders.

Sir Henry Rawlinson says that *Job* was not written till after the Assyrian Captivity. His reasons are, that Bildad is a Persian name, and that the tribe to which Job's friends belonged are not found in the neighborhood of Uz till towards the Captivity. *Eclectic Review*. Feb., 1857.

"The books of the *Kings* are more worthy of credit than the books of the *Chronicles*. * * * Job spake not therefore as it stands written in his book, but hath had such cogitations. It is a sheer allegory. It is probable that Solomon made and wrote this book. * * * This book (*Ecclesiastes*) ought to have been more full; there is too much broken matter in it; it has neither boots nor spurs; but rides only in socks, as I myself when in the cloister. Solomon, therefore, hath not written this book, which had been made in the days of the Maccabees by Sirach. It is like a *Talmud*, compiled from many books, perhaps in Egypt, at the desire of King Ptolemy Euergetes. So, also, have the *Proverbs* of Solomon been collected by others. * * * The book of *Esther* I toss into the Elbe. * * * I am so an enemy to the book of *Esther*, that I would it did not exist; for it Judaizes too much, and hath in it a great deal of heathenish naughtiness. Isaiah hath borrowed his art and knowledge from the *Psalter*. * * * The history of *Jonah* is so monstrous that it is absolutely incredible. * * * That the Epistle to the *Hebrews* is not by St. Paul, nor by any apostle at all, is shown by Chap. II. 3. It was written by an exceedingly learned man, a disciple of the Apostles. It should be no stumbling block, if there should be found in it a mixture of wood, straw, hay. The Epistle of *James* I account the writing of no Apostle. It is an epistle of straw. * * * The Epistle of *Jude* is a copy of St. *Peter's*, and altogether, has stories which have no place in Scripture. * * * In the *Revelations* of St. John much is wanting to let me deem it Scriptural. I can discover no trace that it is established by the spirit." *Luther*.

"The passage concerning Jesus Christ, which was inserted into the text of *Josephus*, between the time of Origen and that of Eusebius, may furnish an example of no vulgar forgery. The accomplishment of the prophecies, the virtues, miracles, and resurrection of Jesus are distinctly related."—*Gibbon. Decline and Fall, Chap. XVI., Note 36. Not contradicted by Milman or Guizot.*

Christian Mysteries Ch. XXIII.

‘The more contrary to reason the divine mystery, so much the more must it be believed for the glory of God.’ *Bacon.*

“The road to Hell is paved with good intentions.”

“If believing too little or too much is so fatal to mankind, what will become of us all?”—*John Adams.*

“He who would not rather be damned than escape through the sufferings of innocence and sanctity, is so far from the qualifications of a saint, that he has not even the magnanimity of Milton’s fiends.”
—*Rev. James Martineau.*

“Nothing appears so revolting to our reason as to say that the transgression of the first man should impart guilt to those, who, from their extreme distance from the source of the evil, seem incapable of such a participation. This transmission seems to us not only unnatural but unjust. For what can be more repugnant to the rules of our despicable justice than to condemn eternally an infant, yet irresponsible, for an offence, in which he appears to have so little share, that it was committed six thousand years before he came into existence?” *Pascal.*

A Negro’s Description of the First Sin.

“My tex’, bruderen and sisteren, will be foun’ in the fus’ chapter ob Ginesis, and de twenty-seben verse, ‘So de Lor’ make man just like Hese’f.’ Now my bruderen, you see dat in the beginnin’ of the world de Lor’ make Adam. I tole you *how* he make him; He make ’im out ob clay, and he sot ’im on a board, an’ he look at him, an’ he say, ‘Furs-rate;’ an’ when he got dry, he breve in ’im de breff of life. He put him in de garden of Eden, and he sot ’im in one corner of de lot, an’ he tole him to eat all de apples, ’ceptin’ dem in de middle ob de orchard : dem he wanted for winter apples. By-me-by Adam, he got lonesome. So, de Lor’ make Ebe. I tole you how he make her. He gib Adam lodlom, till he got sound ’sleep; den he gouge a rib out he side, an make Ebe; an’ he set Ebe in de corner ob de garden, an’ he tole her to eat all de apples, ’ceptin’ dem in de middle ob de orchard; dem he want for winter apples. One day de Lor’ go out a bisitin’; de debble come along; he dress hissel in de skin ob de snake, and he find Ebe; an’ he tole her, ‘Ebe! why for you no eat de apple in de middle ob de orchard?’ Ebe say, ‘Dem me Lor’s winter apples.’ But de debble say, ‘I tole you for to eat dem, case deys de best apples in de orchard.’ So Ebe eat de apple, an’ gib Adam a bite; an’ de debble go away. By-me-by de Lor’ come home, an’ he miss de winter apples, an’ he call, ‘Adam!’ you Adam!’ Adam he lay low; so de Lor’ call again, ‘You Adam!’ Adam say, ‘Hea! Lor’;’ and de Lor’ say,

‘Who stole de winter apples?’ Adam tole him he don’t know—Ebe, he expec’! So de Lor’ call ‘Ebe!’ Ebe she lay low: de Lor’ call again, ‘You Ebe!’ Ebe say, ‘Hea, Lor’.’ De Lor’ say, ‘Who stole de winter apples!’ Ebe tole him she don’t know; Adam she expec’! So de Lor’ cotch em bofe, and he trow dem ober de fence, an’ he tole ‘em, ‘Go, work for your libin’!’—*Knickerbocker*.

Virginity of Mary.

Christians generally not only insist that Mary was a virgin after conceiving and giving birth to Jesus, but all her life. They shut their eyes when they come to the following texts:—

Joseph “knew her [Mary] not till she had brought forth her *first-born* son.” *Mat. I. 25.*

“And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their Synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said ‘Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his *brethren* [brothers] James, and Joses, and Simon and Judas?’” *Mat. XIII. 54, 55.*

“Is not this the carpenter the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judah and of Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” *Mark VI. 3.*

“And she [Mary] brought forth her *first-born* son.” *Luke II. 7.*

“Then came his mother and brethren and could not come at him for the press” [crowd]. *Luke VIII. 19.*

“For neither did his brethren [brothers] believe in him.” *John VII. 5.*

“He went down to Capernaum, he and his mother and his brethren.” *John II. 12.*

“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.” *Acts II. 14.*

“Other of the Apostles saw I [Paul] none, save James the Lord’s brother.” *Gal. I. 19.*

The Evils of Christianity.—Ch. XXIV.

“Without Jesus Christ the world could not continue to exist. It must either be destroyed or become a hell.” *Pascal.*

“No inquirer can fix a direct and clearsighted gaze towards truth who is casting side glances all the while on the prospects of his soul.” *Harriet Martineau.*

“Liberalism will never prevail with those who, in politics, are attached to monarchy, and, in religion, to Christianity.” *Schlegel.*

“The result [of the stubborn attempt of the Christian churches

to adhere to their superannuated creed and gospel] is that utter divorce between practice and profession which has made the entire life of modern England [and America] a frightful lie." *J. A. Froude.*

"I say with Plato, that we are most wantonly taking advantage of a most sacred time to do our children the most cruel injury. I see round me the same results which he so much deplored, and the same causes leading to them; the world living in practical atheism, the clergy frozen and formal; and men like Markham Sunderland [the hero of *the Nemesis of Faith*] who will not be frightened into forfeiting their humanity, heart-broken and dying of despair." *Froude. Nemesis of Faith.*

"I look back with a kind of horror, as well as deep pity, on myself, on the days when I thought it my duty to cultivate (against nature) an anxious solicitude about my own salvation—my own future spiritual welfare." *Harriet Martineau.*

"The general tone of the Bible is that reproof is administered and retribution exacted less on behalf of absolute truth than of divine egotism—less for the infringement of right than for the personal affront." *Revelation its own Nemesis.*

"The Christian priests and ministers are generally conservatives of evil, and hostile to political and social reform, as diverting man's energies from eternity."

"In Calvinism, the doctrine of unconditional election forms a distinguishing feature, and may be called the keystone of the theological arch. All men by birth are in a state of spiritual ruin. Out of this ruin God chose from eternity a certain number. In his own good time he touches them by his omnipotent grace, which they have no power to resist, and calls them to salvation. He passes over the rest, and leaves them reprobate. The selected ones he preserves in a state of grace, and they cannot fall out of it. Original and Total Ruin, Election, Reprobation, Effectual Calling, and Final Perseverance are the five acts in the great drama that winds up the destinies of humanity. The elect were not chosen for any foreseen good in them, for there was none, and the efficacy of the atoning sacrifice does not extend to the race, but is only commensurate with the elected ones." *Christian Examiner (Boston) Jan. 1857.*

"Christianity has mitigated the conduct of war, and the treatment of captives. It has softened the administration of despotic, or nominally despotic governments. It has abolished polygamy. It has restrained the licentiousness of divorces. It has put an end to the exposure of children, and the immolation of slaves. It has suppressed the combats of gladiators, and the impurities of religious rites. It has banished, if not unnatural vices, at least the toleration of them. It has greatly meliorated the condition of the laboring

part, that is to say, of the mass of every community, by procuring for them a day of weekly rest. In all countries in which it is professed, it has produced numerous establishments for the relief of sickness and poverty; and in some a regular and general provision by law. It has triumphed over the slavery established in the Roman Empire; it is contending, and I trust, will one day prevail against the worst slavery of the West Indies." *Paley*.

"The Sophists [in Greece] tried to widen the superficial extent of knowledge rather than to secure its foundations, and the attempt to popularize information involved the usual consequences of lowering its dignity. This loose intellectual system had a direct tendency to countenance immorality. Skepticism corrupted morals as well as metaphysics: good and evil were treated as matters of mere conventional estimation, that is, as having, like truth, only a relative existence; and the virtues enumerated as appropriate to different relations—the statesman, husband, father, and master,—became expedients of policy, instead of obligations of conscience. Confusion of thought led to irregular action; and to the want of fixed principles must be, in part, ascribed the laxity and wide-spread social disorganization described by Thucydides, the disregard of domestic, civil and religious obligation, the prostitution of the name of virtue to successful selfishness, extending even to the arbitrary alteration of the received meaning of words to disguise the open infamy of prevailing vices. The later Sophists, Critias, Polus, and Callicles, carried the subtleties of their principles to an extreme, probably as unforeseen as shameless, when, adopting the unscrupulous license of Greek faction, they openly proclaim happiness to consist in pleasure and success, might to be right, law a device of the weak to limit the natural right of the strong, and religion a political trick for coercing the ignorant. These consequences were, however, inevitably involved in the Sophistical system; and they as inevitably provoked a reaction. The reaction was two-fold. Some, as Aristophanes, would have proscribed philosophy altogether as being in its actual state both useless in itself, and tending to subvert the old morality and faith; others hoped to find a remedy in that which inflicted the wound, and to revive religion and morals by regenerating philosophy."—*R. W. Mackay. Progress of the Intellect. IV. 17.*

The above passage is full of what I call "Infidelity"—distrust of, or disbelief in humanity. How would Mr. Mackay secure the foundations of knowledge better than by widening its superficial extent in universal education? Does knowledge lose its dignity by being popularized? Does skepticism corrupt metaphysics? Is the diffusion of information among the people the establishment of a "loose intellectual system", which countenances immorality? What are the foundations of knowledge, and how are they to be secured?

"The mischief is, that in matters of religion men demand that he who has a mature and well-proportioned piety should always go back to the rude helps of his boyhood, to the A-B-C of religion, and the nursery books of piety. He is not bid to take his power of piety, and apply that to the common works of life. The Newton of piety is sent back to the dame-school of religion, and told to keep counting his fingers, otherwise there is no health in him, and all piety is wiped out of his consciousness, and he hates God, and God hates him. He must study the anicular lines on the school-dame's slate, not the diagrams of God writ on the heaven in points of fire. We are told, that what once thus helped to form a religious character, must be continually resorted to, and become the permanent form thereof.

"This notion is exceedingly pernicious. It wastes the practical power of piety by directing it from its natural work ; it keeps the steam-engine always fanning and blowing itself, perpetually firing itself up, while it turns no wheels but its own, and does no work but feed and fire itself. This constant firing up of one's self, is looked on as the natural work and only form of piety. Ask any popular minister in one of the predominant sects, for the man most marked for piety, and he will not show you the men, with the power of business, who do the work of life,—the upright mechanic, merchant or farmer ; not the men with the power of thought, of justice or of love ; not him whose whole life is one great act of fourfold piety. No, he will show you some men who are always a-dawdling over their souls, going back to the baby-jumpers and nursery-rhymes of their early days, and everlastingly coming to the church to fire themselves up, calling themselves 'miserable offenders', and saying, 'Save us, Good Lord.' If a man thinks himself a miserable offender, let him away with the offense, and be done with the complaint at once and forever. * *

"Not only do men waste the practical power of piety, but they cease to get more. To feed on baby's food, to be dandled in mother's arms,—to play with the boy's playthings, to learn boy's lessons, and be amused with boy's stories,—this helps the boy, but hinders the man. Long ago, we got from these helps all that was in them. To stay longer, is waste of time. * * What, if you kept the boy over his nursery rhymes forever, or tried to make the man grown believe that they contained the finest poetry in the world, that the giant stories, and the fairy tales therein, were all true ; what effect would it have on his mind ? Suppose, you told him, that the proof of his manhood consisted in his fondness for little boys' playthings, and the little story-books and the little games of little children, and kept him securely fastened to the apron-strings of the school-dame ; suppose you could make him believe so ! You must make him a fool first. What would work so bad in intellectual affairs, works quite as ill in the matter of piety.

The story of the flood has strangled a world of souls. The miracles of the New Testament no longer heal, but hurt mankind."

—*Theodore Parker. Sermon on Fourfold Form of Piety.*

"No man is really happy, rational, virtuous, amiable, but the true Christian." *Pascal.*

"I prefer ancient Rome with all its multitude of religions to modern Rome and consider the latter as godless compared with the former." *Schleiermacher.*

"In behalf of Christianity, the foolishness becomes acceptable; the foulest doctrines, the grossest conduct, crimes that like the fabled banquet of Thyestes, might make the sun sicken at the sight and turn back affrighted in his course—these things are counted as beautiful, superior to reason, acceptable to God. The wicked man may bless his brother in crime, the unrighteous blast the holy with his curse, and devotees shall shout, 'Amen,' to both the blessing and the ban." *Parker.*

Sydney Smith makes the following quotation from the journal of a Methodist;

"1794, Jan. 26, Lord's day. Found much pleasure in reading Edward's sermon on the Justice of God in the damnation of sinners."

"The Christians cannot trust God unless they have his bond in black and white, given under oath and attested by witnesses." *Parker.*

"The popular religion is hostile to man: tells us he is an outcast: not a child of God but a spurious issue of the Devil. He must not even pray in his own name. His duty is an impossible thing. No man can do it. He deserves nothing but damnation. Theology tells him that is all he is sure of." *Parker.*

Jesus asks for "the belief of all men, but cares not on what ground they believe." *F. W. Newman.*

"He, who begins by loving Christianity better than Truth, will proceed by his sect better than Christianity and end in living himself better than all." *Coleridge.*

The popular theology "makes God dark and awful; a judge not a protector; a king not a father; jealous, selfish, vindictive. He is the Draco of the universe; the author of sin, and its unfor- giving avenger." *Parker.*

"Orthodox Christianity is unmanly and sneaking. It dares not look reason in the face, but creeps behind tradition and only quotes. It has nothing new and living to say. To hear it talk, one would think God was dead or at best asleep." *Parker.*

"A ready-made creed is the Paradise of the Christian's lazy dreams. A string of authoritative dogmatic propositions comprises

the whole mental wealth which they desire. The volume of nature, the volume of history, the volume of life appal and terrify them." *Greg.*

"I know that there are those who will construe what they will call my lenity towards unbelief into treachery towards Christianity. There are those who think that unless skepticism be ranked among the worst crimes, and the infidel marked out for abhorrence and dread, the multitude of men will lose their hold on the Gospel. An opinion more discreditable to Christianity cannot easily be advanced by its friends. It virtually admits that the proofs of our religion, unless examined under the influence of terror, cannot work conviction; that the gospel cannot be left, like other subjects, to the calm and unbiased judgment of mankind. I discover a distrust of Christianity, with which I have no sympathy. And here I would remark, that the worst abuses of our religion have sprung from this cowardly want of confidence in its power. Its friends have feared that it could not stand without a variety of artificial buttresses. They have imagined that men must now be bribed into faith by annexing to it temporal privileges, now driven into it by menaces and inquisitions, now attracted by gorgeous forms, now awed by mysteries and superstitions; in a word that the multitude must be imposed upon, or the religion will fall. I have no such distrust of Christianity; I believe in its invincible powers. It is founded in our nature. It meets our deepest wants. Its proofs as well as principles are adapted to the common understandings of men, and need not to be aided by appeals to fear or any other passion, which would discourage inquiry or disturb the judgment. I fear nothing for Christianity if left to speak in its own tones, to approach men, with its unveiled, benignant countenance. I do fear much from the weapons of policy and intimidation, which are framed to uphold the imagined weakness of Christian truth."—*W. E. Channing.*

Emerson complains that the Gospels dwell with "noxious exaggeration about the *person* of Jesus."

"Think not that I am about to have recourse to those common means of representing to you, how necessary religion is to support social order and political justice, and to come to the help of the limited powers and short sight of humanity with warnings, that there is an all-seeing eye and an omnipotent power. I shall not argue for Religion by endeavoring to show you how true a friend, and how valuable a support she may be to morality, by harmonizing the inward struggles of man, and strengthening him in his good purposes with her holy feelings and glorious anticipations. Many of those who call themselves the best friends and the most zealous defenders of religion speak in this style; but I shall not decide which of the parties suggested in such language is the most deserving of contempt—the justice and morality which are represented as needing

support—the religion which is to furnish the support—or they to whom such arguments are used.” *Schleiermacher. Ueber die Religion.*

Physiology vs. a Future State.—Ch. XXV.

Christians have always endeavored to justify themselves in claiming immortality for men, while they deny it to brutes, by asserting that the mental powers of the latter are instinctive, while those of the former are reasoning. That the minds of brutes are different in some important and singular particulars from those of men is not to be denied : but it has not been shewn that reason is more worthy of immortality than instinct. Brougham asserts that the bee makes his cell on that model which the highest mathematicians have declared to be the best of all possible forms, for strength and roominess ; and some bugs cut leaves for the purpose of sewing up their eggs in such forms as, if first made by a man, would be considered proof positive of a very high scientific knowledge. On this point, I can give no more light than is contained in the subjoined extracts.

Lord Brougham in his *Dialogues on Instinct*, gives the following notes, in all seriousness ; and Brodie lends credit to them ;—

“ When a sow farrows, the pigs are expelled with some force, and to a little distance, by the action of the uterus and abdominal muscles. Each pig instantly runs up to one of the teats, which he ever after regards as his own peculiar property : and when more pigs than teats are produced, the latter ones run to the tails of some of the others, and suck till they die of inanition.

“ Mr. Davy, in his account of Ceylon, mentions a remarkable instinct of the alligator. He saw an egg in the sand just ready to crack, and broke it with his stick. The animal came out and made at once for the river. He held his stick before it, and immediately the reptile put itself in a posture of defence, as an adult alligator would have done in like circumstances.”

“ On dissecting a goat great with young, I found a brisk embryo, and having detached it from the matrix, and snatched it away before it saw its dam, I brought it into a room where there were many vessels, some filled with wine, others with oil, some with honey, others with milk or some other liquor, and in others there were grain and fruits. We first observed the young animal get upon its feet and walk ; then it shook itself, and afterwards scratched its side with one of its feet ; then we saw it smelling to every one of these things that were set in the room, and when it had smelt to them all, it drank up the milk.” *Galen as quoted in Dr. Herbert Mayo's Physiology.*

“ A fly-catcher, for instance, just come out of its shell, has been seen to peck at an insect, with an aim as perfect as if it had been

engaged all its life [during a long life] in learning its art." *Carpenter.*

"A monkey, tied to a stake, was robbed by the Johnny-Crows (in the West Indies) of his food, and he conceived the following plan of punishing the thieves. He feigned death, and lay perfectly motionless on the ground, near to his stake. The birds approached by degrees, and got near enough to steal his food, which he allowed them to do. This he repeated several times, till they became so bold as to come within the reach of his claws. He calculated his distance, and laid hold of one of them. Death was not his plan of punishment; he was more refined in his cruelty. He plucked every feather out of the bird, and then let him go and show himself to his companions. He made a man of him, according to the ancient definition of a 'biped without feathers.'" *Illustrations of Instinct.*

"Jack, as he was called, seeing his master and some companions drinking, with those imitative powers for which his species is remarkable, finding half a glass of whiskey left, took it up and drank it off. It flew, of course, to his head. Amid their loud roars of laughter, he began to skip, hop, and dance. Jack was drunk. Next day, when they went with the intention of repeating the fun, to take the poor monkey from his box, he was not to be seen. Looking inside, there he lay, crouching in a corner. 'Come out!' said his master. Afraid to disobey, he came walking on three legs—the fore-paw that was laid on his forehead, saying, as plain as words could do, that he had a headache.

"Having been left some days to get well, and resume his gaiety, they at length carried him off to the old scene of revel. On entering, he eyed the glasses with manifest terror, skulking behind the chair; and on his master ordering him to drink, he bolted, and he was on the house-top in a twinkling. They called him down. He would not come. His master shook the whip at him. Jack, astride on the ridge-pole, grinned defiance. A gun, of which he was always much afraid, was pointed at this disciple of temperance; he ducked his head, and slipped over to the back of the house; upon which, seeing his predicament, and less afraid apparently of the fire than the fire-water, the monkey leaped at a bound on the chimney-top, and getting down into a flue, held on by his fore-paws. He would rather be singed than drink. He triumphed, and although his master kept him for twelve years after that, he never could persuade the monkey to taste another drop of whiskey." *Dr. Guthrie.*

Vigan on Reason in Animals.

"That animals are perfectly capable of following out a process of original ratiocination, I have witnessed numerous examples. I once offered an apple to an elephant, and let it drop the moment he was about to seize it; it rolled out of his reach. He waited a moment to see if I would pick it up, and being disappointed in this

expectation, set himself to blow violently against the opposite wall, and the recoil forced the apple to his feet. Now, this was a trick which it was impossible that any one could have taught him, and it must have arisen from a process of reflection perfectly similar to that which takes place in the human mind. * * * * *

"I noticed, a short time ago, the following example of insect reasoning. A large spider established himself in a recess formed by a shed and a projection of the house, and taking his long line diagonally from a corner of the house to the eaves of a small building which was at the bottom of the recess, he then filled up the triangular space with a large and well-defined circular web. I noticed with admiration, during the day, his wonderful skill, the accuracy of his lines, and the equality of the spaces, and observed how carefully he pushed down his line, and fastened it securely with his two hind-feet to each radius in succession. When he had finished about two-thirds of his concentric circles, or rather of his helix, he went to the centre and swallowed a quantity of white tenacious mucus, which he had deposited there at the commencement, having apparently spun himself out. He then proceeded to complete his work, which, having accomplished, and thus reduced himself to very small dimensions, he hung himself up by the hind-legs, and I presume went to sleep. The slightest touch of a fly, however, was sufficient to make him start out; and having wrapped up a few of them in his toils, and well stocked his larder, he again betook himself to repose.

"In the meantime one of the smaller spiders, considering that the diagonal line of his neighbor was strong enough to bear two webs, began to attach his lines to it, and having done so in four or five places, proceeded to spin his own web. My older friend tolerated the intrusion very patiently, and acquiesced in the use his neighbor was making of a 'party wall', though against *spider law*. By-and-by the new comer, having partly fitted up his own trap, and finding that no flies came into it, observing, I presume, the ample supply of food in his neighbor's premises, advanced along one of his own lines, seemingly for the purpose of open burglary. My old friend had tolerated much, but this was a degree of impudence for which he was not prepared, and which he determined to punish forthwith. He proceeded to the centre of his web, and giving the whole framework a violent shake, hoped to shake the intruder down to the ground. He did no more, however, than turn him round on the line, where he hung very patiently till the shaking ceased, and then resumed his march towards his neighbor's territory. Again and again, and with increasing violence, did the large spider shake his web,—it was all in vain: there was the enemy advancing, and though so small as to be easily over-shouldered, should he reach the mainland, the insult was intolerable. In the end, my elder friend saw that during the violent shaking round, he had broken two or three of his own short lines, and he

ponent and set himself to work, to mend them. Having completed the task to his perfect satisfaction, he returned to the burglar. The latter, when he came near, saw at once that he had been rash in provoking such an enemy, and hurried back to his own web. When his opponent saw him on his thin line, on his retreat, he again set himself to his shaking fit, and make the most violent efforts to throw him down; it was all in vain, however, and he got safe home. After a moment's consideration, the other seemed to think that so audacious an attempt ought to be condignly punished, and he determined to retort the invasion. The thin lines of his diminutive antagonist, however, did not afford a sufficient support for his heavy bulk, and as he advanced he carefully spun a strengthener upon the other's tenuous cord. It was now the little one's turn to shake off the intruder, and twice did he break the thin part of the line, and leave his enemy dangling. At last the latter gave up the attempt, and went back to the centre of his own web, after *carefully detaching every one of the lines* which his neighbor had had the impudence to fasten to the long diagonal.

"If this be not a process of reasoning, then I cannot understand the meaning of the word. Here was calculation of means to an end, and change of plan in consequence of unexpected obstacles. Had the human race spun webs, and dared one another to single combat, I do not see how they could have shown more judgment and skill in the attack and defence. As I patiently watched the spiders, I could not but put words into their mouths, and fancy the conversation, although words could scarcely have added any force or distinctness to the pantomime I witnessed. The strengthening of his own lines in order to bear the shaking, and the doubling of his neighbor's lines, while advancing to punish him, were really the strategy of an acute general; and I think I have seen more than one biped, bearing the title, who was scarcely possessed of an equal amount of the power of ratiocination."—*Duality of the Mind.*

"One sight of a pigeon paying his addresses would be sufficient to unsettle in our minds all those proud conclusions which we draw respecting the difference between reason and instinct. If this is mere instinct, as distinguished from reason, if a bird follow another up and down by a simple mechanical impulse, giving himself all the airs and graces imaginable, exciting as many in his mistress, and uttering every moment articulate sounds, which we are no more bound to suppose deficient in meaning than a pigeon would be warranted in supposing the same of our speech, then reason itself may be no more than a mere mechanical impulse. It has nothing better to show for it." *Leigh Hunt.*

"You can't catch an *old* bird with chaff."

“Notwithstanding the evidences of rationality which many of the lower animals present, and the manifestations which they display of emotions that are similar to own, there is no ground to believe that they have any of that controlling power over their psychical operations which *we* possess ; on the contrary, all observation seems to lead to the conclusion that they are under the complete domination of the ideas and opinions by which they are for the time possessed, and have no power either of repressing these by a forcible act of the will, or of turning the attention by a like voluntary effort into another channel. In this respect, then, their condition resembles that of the dreamer, the somnambule, or the insane patient, in all of whom the voluntary control is suspended, and who (when their minds are susceptible of external impressions) may be so played upon by the suggestion of ideas that any respondent action, consistent with the habitual mental state of the individual, may be evoked by an appropriate stimulus.”—*Carpenter*.—*Hum. Phys.*, § 684.

“It seems evident that animals, as well as men, learn many things from experience, and infer that the same events will always follow from the same causes. By this principle, they become acquainted with the more obvious properties of external objects, and, gradually, from their birth, treasure up a knowledge of the nature of fire, water, earth, stones, heights, depths, etc., and of the effects which result from their operations. The ignorance and inexperience of the young are here plainly distinguishable from the cunning and sagacity of the old, who have learned by long observation, to avoid what hurt them, and to pursue whatever gave ease or pleasure. A horse, that has been accustomed to the field, becomes acquainted with the proper height which he can leap, and will never attempt what exceeds his force or ability. An old greyhound will trust the more fatiguing part of the chase to the younger, and will place himself so as to meet the hare in her doubles ; nor are the conjectures which he forms on this occasion, founded on anything but his observation and experience.

“This is still more evident from the effects of discipline and education on animals, who, by the proper application of rewards and punishments, may be taught any course of action, the most contrary to their natural instincts and propensities. * * * In all these cases, we may observe that the animal infers some fact beyond what immediately strikes his senses ; and this inference is altogether founded on past experience, while the creature expects from the present object the same consequences which it has always found in its observation, to result from similar objects.”—*Hume*.

“For several years past, we have had a young orang-outang in the Jardin des Plantes. I have been enabled to study him, and he has often surprised me by his intelligence. He recalled to mind the observations, made by Buffon on an orang-outang which he had

observed. I have seen this animal present his hand to lead away the persons who had come to visit him, promenade gravely with them and as if for company : I have seen him sit down at the table, unfold his napkin, wipe his lips, use a fork and spoon to convey food to his mouth, pour out his drink into a glass, touch it to the glasses of others when invited, go and take a cup and saucer, place them on the table, put in sugar, pour out tea, allow it to cool for drinking, and all this without any other instigation than the signs or words of his master, and often of his own motion. He never injured any one, approached persons with circumspection, and presented himself as if to demand caresses. Our young orang-outang did all these things. He was very gentle, loved caresses greatly, particularly those of little children ; played with them, sought to imitate everything that was done before him, &c.

“ He understood very well how to take the key of the chamber where it had been placed, insert it in the lock, and open the door. This key was sometimes put on the mantle-piece, and then he raised himself to get it with the aid of a cord which hung from the ceiling. A knot was made in the cord to shorten it, but he immediately untied it. Like the orang-outang of Buffon, he was not impatient, and petulant like other monkeys : his air was sad, his walk grave, his movements measured.

“ I went one day to visit him with an illustrious old man, a keen and profound observer. His dress slightly singular, his slow and feeble walk, and his bent figure fixed the attention of the young animal from the moment of our arrival. He lent himself to everything demanded of him, but kept his eye constantly fixed upon his venerable visitor. We were about to retire when he approached the stranger, took the cane with a mild manner but a malicious purpose, and leaning upon it, and bending his back, he began to walk slowly about the room imitating the attitude and gait of my old friend. He then returned the stick of his own accord, and we left him fully satisfied that he was not without a faculty of observation.”
Flourens.

“ There is hardly a mechanical pursuit in which insects do not excel. They are excellent weavers, house-builders, architects. They make diving-bells, bore galleries, raise vaults, construct bridges. They line their houses with tapestry, clean them, ventilate them, and close them with admirably-fitted swing-doors. They build and store warehouses, construct traps in the greatest variety, hunt skilfully, rob and plunder. They poison, sabre and strangle their enemies. They have social laws, a common language, division of labor, and gradations of rank. They maintain armies, go to war, send out scouts, appoint sentinels, carry off provisions, keep slaves and tend domestic animals.” *Quoted as correct in Brodie's Mind and Matter, Ch. V*

"It would seem that in the proportion which their instincts and intelligence bear to each other, that the difference between the mind of man and that of other animals, chiefly consists. Reasoning is not peculiar to the former, nor instinct to the latter." *Brodie. Mind and Matter. Ch. V.*

A drunken man don't remember, when sober, what he did when drunk. A young infant has no memory.

"Ants have a kind of language [communicated] by means of their feelers or antennæ; and every day's experience seems to show this in other animals." *Brougham.*

"Respecting the elephant, extraordinary accounts are told by military men who were in the Burmese war. They relate that when any extraordinary task is to be performed by them, some favorite dainty is held up before hand, and the sagacious animal, comprehending the promise of reward thus implied, exerts himself to earn it. This comes to the principle of barter, as near as may be." *Same.*

The majority of the physiological writers of the present day who wish to be understood as favoring the immortality of the soul, argue that the soul is distinct from the mind, the latter being admitted to be a mere function of the brain. Among those who take this ground are Wigan (*Duality of the Mind*), Millingen (*Mind and Matter*), Brigham (*Mental Excitement and Cultivation*), and J. J. G. Wilkinson, (*The Human Body and its connection with Man.*)

Wear of Brain.

"Like all other tissues actively concerned in the vital operations, Nervous matter is subject to *waste* or *disintegration*, which bears an exact proportion to the activity of its operations—or, in other words, that every act of the Nervous system involves the death and decay of a certain amount of Nervous matter, the replacement of which will be requisite in order to maintain the system in a state fit for action. * * There are certain parts of the Nervous system, particularly those which put in action the respiratory muscles which are in a state of unceasing though moderate, activity; and in these, the constant nutrition is sufficient to repair the effects of the constant decay. But those parts, which operate in a more powerful and energetic manner, and which therefore waste more rapidly when in action, need a season of rest for their reparation. Thus, a sense of fatigue is experienced, when the mind has been long acting through its instrument, the brain, indicating the necessity of rest and reparation. And when *sleep*, or cessation of the cerebral functions, comes on, the process of nutrition takes place with unchecked energy, counterbalances the results of the previous waste, and prepares the organ for a renewal of its activity. In the healthy state of the body, when the exertion of the nervous system by day

does not exceed that, which the repose of the night may compensate, it is maintained in a condition which fits it for constant moderate exercise; but unusual demands upon its powers—whether by the long continued and severe exercise of the intellect, by excitement of the emotions, or by combination of both in that state of *anxiety* which the circumstances of man's condition so frequently induce—produce an unusual waste, which requires, for a complete restoration of its powers, a prolonged repose.

“There can be no doubt that (from causes which are unknown,) the amount of sleep required by different persons, for the maintenance of a healthy condition of the nervous system, varies considerably; some being able to dispense with it, to a degree which would be exceedingly injurious to others of no greater mental activity. Where a prolonged exertion of the mind has been made, and the natural tendency to sleep has been habitually resisted by a strong effort of the will, injurious results are sure to follow. The bodily health breaks down, and too frequently the mind itself is permanently enfeebled. It is obvious that the nutrition of the nervous system becomes completely deranged; and that the tissue is no longer formed, in the manner requisite for the discharge of its healthy functions.

“As the amount of muscular tissue that has undergone disintegration is represented, (other things being equal,) by the quantity of urea in the urine, so do we find that an unusual waste of the *nervous* matter is indicated by an increase in the amount of *phosphatic* deposits. No others of the soft issues contain any large proportion of phosphorus; and the marked increase in these deposits, which has been continually observed to accompany long-continued *wear* of mind, whether by intellectual exertion or by anxiety, can scarcely be set down to any other cause. The most satisfactory proof is to be found in cases in which there is a periodical demand upon the mental powers; as, for example, among clergymen, in the preparation for and discharge of their Sunday duties. This is found to be almost invariably followed by the appearance of a large quantity of the phosphates in the urine. And in cases in which constant and severe intellectual exertion has impaired the nutrition of the brain, and has constantly weakened the mental power, it is found that any premature attempt to renew the activity of its exercise, causes the reappearance of the excessive phosphatic discharge, which indicates an undue waste of nervous matter.”—*Carpenter. Elements of Physiology.*

From Vogt's Physiology.

“But it was always principally theology that wished to speak a word to obstruct the progress of the natural sciences, which planted these [orthodox, anti-scientific] representations in the theory of human development, and sought to keep them there. The soul was indeed given to the priest as his domain; he was to care for it, not only while it was in the body, but also after it should have left

its earthly dwelling; and to prevent their subject from escaping, the priests asserted, in the face of all evidence, the existence of an immaterial mind which would live after death independently of the body.

"It is not necessary to go into a lengthy essay to show the manner in which sound philosophy views this question. There are only two points of observation. Either the function of every organ of an animated body is an immaterial being which only makes use of the organ; or the function is a property of the matter. In the latter case the intellectual faculties are only functions of the brain, develop themselves with it, and expire with it. The soul, therefore, does not take possession of the foetus, as the evil spirit was represented to enter lunatics, but is a product of the development of the brain, as the muscular power is a product of the development of the muscles."—*Vogt's Physiologische Briefe*.

The same author says elsewhere :

"Physiology breaks the support of the views of theologians in regard to the soul, by declaring that there are no active powers in man, except the material organs and their functions, and that the latter must die with the former. We have seen that we can destroy the intellectual faculties by injuring the brain. By the observation of the development of the embryo, we can easily convince ourselves that the mental powers grow as the brain is gradually developed. The foetus makes no manifestations of thought or consciousness, but its movements evince the capability of reflex action and the susceptibility to nervous influence. Only after birth does the child begin to think, and only after birth does its brain acquire the material development of which it is capable. With the course of life, the mind changes, and it ceases to exist with the death of the organ.

"Physiology declares herself positively and clearly against any individual immortality, and against all those representations which connect themselves with the separate existence of a soul. She is not only entitled to speak a word on this subject, but it is her duty, and physiologists are justly liable to reproach for not having sooner raised their voices to point out the only true method of solving the problem of the soul."

"I see no reason to believe, that the soul thinks before the senses have furnished it with ideas to think on."—*Locke*.

"All the operations of the mind are originally dependent upon the reception of sensations. If it were possible for a human being to come into the world, with a brain perfectly prepared to be the instrument of psychical operations, but, with all the inlets to sensation closed, we have every reason to believe that the mind would remain dormant, like a seed buried deep in the earth. The attentive study of cases in which there is a congenital deficiency of one or more sensations, makes it evident that the mind is utterly

incapable of forming any definite ideas in regard to those properties of objects, of which those particular sensations are adapted to take cognizance. Thus the man who is born blind, can form no conception of color : nor the congenitally deaf, of musical tones. And in those lamentable cases, in which the sense of touch is the only one through which ideas can be introduced, it is evident that the mental operations must remain of the simplest and most limited character, if the utmost attention be given by a judicious instructor, to the development of the intellectual faculties and the cultivation of the moral feelings, through that restricted class of ideas which there is a possibility of exciting. The activity of the mind then, is just as much the result of its consciousness of external impressions, by which its faculties are called into play, as the life of the body is dependent on the appropriation of nutrient materials, and the constant influence of external forces."—*Carpenter. Hum. Phys.* § 786.

The celebrated Wm. Lawrence, whose disregard of church doctrines, in teaching that the mind was only a function of the brain, in his academical lectures, about the year 1818 in London, brought down upon him the vain thunders of the church, said :— "There is no digestion without an alimentary cavity : no biliary secretion without some kind of liver : no thought without a brain. To talk of life as independent of the animal body,—to speak of a function without reference to an appropriate organ, is physiologically absurd. It is looking for an effect without a cause. We might as reasonably expect daylight while the sun is below the horizon. What should we think of abstracting elasticity, cohesion, gravity, and bestowing them in a separate existence from the bodies in which those properties are seen."

"We must not imagine that after death we shall commence a new period of existence, like the present, and still less, that we shall have a like, or a more noble and splendid dwelling-place. * * If we speak of the continuance of the soul after death, in time and space, we are compelled to inquire after its preëxistence. For a future personal existence implies a previous personal existence ; and the latter presents even more serious difficulties than the former. If we existed before birth, why have we no recollection of it ? And if no consciousness of this state remain to us, how will a consciousness of our present earthly life remain to us after death ? And yet this is precisely what the most of men are concerned about. They wish to take with them their consciousness, their remembrance of this life into the other. The pious man, who has a clear understanding of his faith, can only laugh at this solicitude about the consciousness, as we should laugh at the child who should be afraid, that when grown up, it could no longer play with dolls."—*De Wette — Translated in Norton's Tracts.*

Belief in a future life "is for the higher classes, and especially for women of quality, who have nothing to do but to busy themselves with ideas of immortality. But an able man, who thinks that there is something to be done here, and who, therefore, has every day to strive, to fight, and to work, leaves the future world to itself, and is active and useful in the present. Ideas of immortality moreover are for such as have not attained the best fortune here ; and I would wager that if the good Tiedge had had better luck, he would have had better thoughts." *Goethe.*

"I could be well content that after the close of this life we should be blessed with another, but I would beg not to have there for companions any who had believed in it here." *Goethe.*

Pantheism—Ch. XXVI.

Scene from Goethe's Faust.

MARGARET. Promise me, Henry.

FAUST. All that I can.

MARG. Are you religious ? You are a good man, but I think you do not go to church.

F. Leave that, my child. You know I love you, and would give my life for my love. I wish to rob no one of his-faith : I would hurt no one's feelings.

MARG. That is not enough. You must have religion.

F. Must I ?

MARG. Alas ! I cannot influence you ! and you do not respect the sacraments.

F. Indeed I do.

MARG. But not with love. And you have not been at mass or confessional for ever so long. Do you believe in God ?

F. My dear, who can say "I believe in God ?" Ask priest or philosopher, and the answer is like mockery.

MARG. Then you do not believe in Him ?

F. Mistake me not, you angel. Who dare name Him ? And who can say "I believe in Him ?" Who that feels, dares say "I have no God !" The all-embracer, the all-sustainer, does He not surround you, me, Himself ? Is not the Heaven arched over us ? Is not the earth firm beneath us ? Do we not see each other eye to eye, and does not all existence rise to your head and heart, and float in infinite majesty before you ? Let your heart, big as it is, be full of the great idea, and when you are perfectly happy in the thought name it what you will, Good—Heart—Love—God. I have no name for it. The feeling is all in all : the name is but noise and smoke, clouding celestial glory.

"And I have felt

A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
 A motion and a spirit that impels
 All thinking beings, all objects of all thought
 And rolls through all things."

(*Wordsworth. Tintern Abbey.*)

The *Christian Observer* (May, 1850) says Wordsworth's "majestic lines in the poem on revisiting Tintern Abbey are the grandest expression of the sentiment of Pantheism with which we are acquainted."

"The natural philosopher knows only and knows beyond a doubt that there are no forces in nature except the physical, chemical and mechanical." *Buechner.*

"In rising from cause to cause men have ended by seeing nothing ; and in this obscurity they placed their God : in this dark abyss their restless imaginations toil to manufacture chimeras which will oppress them, until an acquaintance with nature shall have stripped the phantoms which they have in all ages so vainly adored.

"If we wish to render an account to ourselves of the nature of our belief in the Deity, we must confess that, by the word God, men have never been able to designate more than the most hidden cause, the most unknown and distant of effects. The word is not used until natural and known causes cease to be visible ; not until they lose the thread of causes or, being unable to follow it, cut through the difficulty by styling God the first cause : that is, he is the last cause of which they know anything. Thus they only give a vague title to an unknown force, before which their ignorance or idleness forces them to stop. Whenever any one says that God is the author of such a phenomenon, it is as much as to say that he does not know how that phenomenon could be produced by natural causes known to us."—*System of Nature.*

"The man who first pronounced the barbarous word "Dien" [God,] ought to have been immediately destroyed."—*Diderot.*

"To say what God is, it would be necessary to be himself."

"If God be not everything he is nothing."—*Cousin.*

Belief in the personality of God is a "theologic cramp."
Emerson.

"The two rocks that threaten Theology seem to be a Theosophy which resolves all into God, and Anthropomorphism, which in fact denies the infinite. This mystical tendency, denominated Pantheism, appears in the ancient religions of the East ; it enters largely into the doctrines of the Sufis, a Mohammedan sect."—*Parker.*

“What is law? Nothing more nor less than the uniform mode in which divine power works.”—*Hitchcock*.

He begs the whole question at issue whether the known law is the mode in which an unknown divinity acts.

“At present Natural Theology has undertaken the impossible task of ‘finding out God,’ who can only be found in so far as he has pleased to reveal himself. The Deity thus elicited, or as Fichte rightly says ‘constructed,’ is a scientific abstraction answering to the concrete figure of the Vulcan of the Greeks—that is to say a universal smith.”—*J. J. G. Wilkinson*.

“A personal God is not thinkable consistantly with philosophical ideas.”—*Fichte*.

“A living God is not thinkable without a material basis.” *Schelling*.

“Our human personality gives a false modification to all our conceptions of the infinite.”—*Parker*.

“Final causes are nothing but human figments.”—*Spinoza*.

“The idea of a personal God is pure mythology.”—*Schleiermacher*.

“There is no other philosophy but the philosophy of Spinoza.” *Lessing*.

“Personality is of but one kind, admitting no modifications or degrees. The word must have the same meaning whether used of man, an angel or the divinity. To deny *human* personality to God, or personality like that of man, is to deny a personal God.” *Norton*.

“God is conscious only in man.”—*Hegel*.

“The idea of God is his existence.”—*Strauss*.

“God is X—the unknown quantity.”—*Karl Vogt*.

“God is a word to express, not our ideas, but our want of them.” *Mill. Analysis of the Human Mind*.

Goethe has a few famous lines beginning—

“Was waer ein Gott der nur von aussen stiesse,” etc.

For this passage I can find no translation to suit me, and must reduce it to prose as follows: “Alas for the creed whose God lives outside of the universe, and lets it spin round his finger. The universal spirit dwells within and not without. He includes Nature and Nature includes Him.”

“The proof of the existence of a [personal] God derived from the existence of the external universe [adduced in the argument from design], as perceived through the senses, is impossible and self-contradictory.”—*Fichte*.

"You are fit [says the supreme Khrishna of Brahminism to a sage] to apprehend that you are not distinct from me : that which I am, thou art, and that also is the world, with its gods, and heroes, and mankind. Men contemplate distinctions because they are stupefied with ignorance."—*Emerson on Plato.*

Emerson is a Pantheist ; and Carlyle appears to be, though the shade of the latter's belief is not seizable from his works. In the *Life of Sterling* he relates a conversation between Sterling and another person (evidently Carlyle). Sterling declared the faith of the other to be "flat Pantheism. It is mere Pantheism, that!" "And suppose it were Pot-theism," cried the other, "if it is true?"

Bacon appears to have been a Pantheist. He says in his *De Cupidine* (on the Source of Existence), "Almost all the ancients—Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, Democritus—though disagreeing in other respects upon the prime matter, joined in this—that they held an active matter with a form, both arranging its own form, and having within itself a principle of motion. Nor can any one think otherwise without leaving experience altogether. All these, then, submitted their minds to nature." Again he says of this same Pantheism of Democritus : "But while the dicta of Aristotle and Plato are celebrated with applauses and professional ostentation in the schools, the philosophy of Democritus was in great repute among the wiser sort and those who more closely gave themselves to the depth and silence of contemplation." Again he says, "The prime matter is to be laid down, joined with the primitive form, as also with the first principles of motion, as it is found. For the abstraction of motion has also given rise to innumerable devices, concerning spirits—life and the like—as if there were not laid a sufficient ground for them through matter and form, but they depended on their own elements. But these three (matter, form, and life) are not to be separated, but only distinguished ; and matter is to be treated (whatever it may be) in regard to its adornment, appendages, and form, as that all kind of influence, essence, action, and natural motion may appear to be its emanation and consequence."

Bacon was long supposed to be no enemy of Christianity, because he did not violently oppose it. But he was not disposed to be a martyr to Christian fanaticism. He laments that he cannot "dismiss all art and circumstance, and exhibit the matter naked to us, that we might be enabled to use our judgment. Thinkest thou," he says, "that when all the accesses and motions of all minds are besieged and obstructed by the obscurest idols, deeply rooted and branded in, the sincere and polished areas present themselves in the true and native rays of things ; but as the delirium of phrenetics (frenzy) is subdued by art and ingenuity, not by force and contention, raised to fury ; so in this universal insanity, we must use moderation."—*Quoted by Atkinson.*

"That none of the ancient philosophers conceived God, for instance, as a being distinct from the world, or a pure metaphysical monad, but all adhered to the idea of a soul of the world, was perfectly consonant to the childhood of human philosophy, and perhaps will forever remain consonant to it."—*Herder. Philosophy of History.*

I was "the enthusiastic disciple and most decided worshipper" of Spinoza.—*Goethe.—Wahrheit und Dichtung, Buch XIV.*

"In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Crishna says "I am author of the creation and the dissolution of the universe. There is nothing greater than I am, O Ardjouna, and every thing depends upon me, as the pearls upon the string which holds them, I am the vapor in water, the light in the sun and in the moon, the invocation in the Vedas, the sound in the air, the masculine energy in man, the sweet perfume in the earth, the brightness in the flame, the life in animals, the fervor of zeal, the eternal seed of all nature; I am the wisdom of the sage, the power of the powerful, the glory of him who has glory. * * In animated beings I am chaste love. I am the father of the world; I am of it the mother, the grand-parent, the director; I am the secret doctrine, the expiation, the holy monosyllable, the three books of the Vedas: I am guide, nourisher, master witness, abode, shelter, friend; I am the source of heat and the source of rain; I have in my hand ambrosia and death; I am being and non-entity. * * Put thy confidence in me alone; be humble in spirit and renounce the fruit of actions. Knowledge is superior to works and contemplation is superior to knowledge."—*Cousin Mod. Phil. Second Series, Vol. II. Sec. VI.*

The Moral Government of the Universe.

The attempts to account for the moral government of the world, the sufferings of the good and the prosperity of the wicked, have been very numerous, but the solution of the problem is beyond the reach of the human mind. The stoics and the optimists say there is no evil; all is good.

Gibbon speaks of Zoroastrianism as "a bold and injudicious attempt of Eastern philosophy to reconcile the existence of a Beneficent Creator and Governor of the Universe with the prevalence of physical and moral evil."

An ancient author thought there would be no difficulty in accounting for the moral government of the world, if we would suppose the sufferings of the righteous to be trials and those of the wicked to be punishments. Voltaire, speaking of the drowning of a boat-load of people, among whom was a great criminal, said, "God has punished that rogue, the devil has punished the rest." Diderot, in recording the different fate of

"Providence has chastised one, but has granted some moments of respite to the other."

"Why God not kill Debbil?" *Friday in Robinson Crusoe.*

"Either God would prevent evil and cannot, or he can and would not, or he cannot and would not, or he will and can. If he would prevent evil and cannot, he is not omnipotent; if he can and would not, he is not all-good; if he cannot and would not desire to do so, he is limited in both power and goodness; and if he has the power and the desire to prevent evil, why does he not do so?"
—*Epicurus.*

"To say that God is the author of all good, and man the author of all evil, is to say that one man made a straight line and a crooked one, and another man made the incongruity."—*Shelley.*

"It is plain that the same arguments which prove that God is the author of food, light and life prove him also to be the author of poison, darkness and death. The wide-wasting earthquake, the storm, the battle, and the tyranny are attributable to this hypothetic being in the same degree as the fairest forms of nature, sunshine, liberty and peace."—*Shelley.*

"The rashness of our judging the divine conduct in our present state of imperfection, may be compared to the folly of a man who should judge of a room full of complicated machinery, by looking through a key-hole."

"We must defer something at least to the divine wisdom, so as to believe God just, when he may appear to us unjust. For if his justice were such that human apprehension might perceive it to be just, it plainly would not be divine, and would differ in nothing from human justice."—*Luther.*

"I [Jehovah] form the light and create darkness: I cause prosperity and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things."—*Is. XLV. 7.*

"Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"—*Job. II. 10.*

"Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?"
Amos III. 6.

"There is, in fact, no part of man's psychical nature which does not speak to him of the Divine, when it is rightly questioned. The very perception of *finite* existence, whether in time or space, leads to the idea of the infinite. The perception of *dependent* existence leads to the idea of the self-existent. The perception of change in the external world leads to the idea of an absolute power as its source. The perception of the order and constancy, underlying all those diversities which the surface of nature presents,

leads to the idea of the unity of that power. The recognition of intelligent will as the source of the power we ourselves exert, leads to the idea of a like will as operating in the universe. And our own capacities for reasoning, which we know not to have been obtained by our individual exertions, is a direct testimony to the intelligence of the Being who implanted it. So we are led, from the very existence of our moral feelings, to the conception of the existence of attributes, the same in kind, however exalted in degree in the Divine Being.”—*Carpenter. Hum. Phys.* § 816.

Moral Responsibility.—Ch. XXVII.

“I have known one in that state, when he has tried to abstain but for one evening—though the poisonous potion had long ceased to bring back its first enchantments—though he was sure it would rather deepen his gloom than brighten it—in the violence of the struggle and in the necessity he has felt of getting rid of the present sensation at any rate, I have known him to scream out, to cry aloud, for the anguish and pain of the strife within him. Why should I hesitate to declare that the man of whom I speak is myself?”—*Charles Lamb. Confessions of a Drunkard.*

“No man is free to wish harm to himself.”

“There is a state of mind (a very common one) in which a human being, perfectly aware that he is doing wrong and destroying his own happiness, cannot refrain from the impulse of present gratification.”—*Sydney Smith.*

“Man’s life is a line that nature commands him to describe on the surface of the earth, without his ever being able to swerve from it, even for an instant. He is born without his own consent: his organization in nowise depends upon himself: his ideas come to him involuntarily: his habits are in the power of those who cause him to contract them: he is unceasingly modified by causes, whether visible or concealed, over which he has no control, which necessarily regulate his mode of existence, give the hue to his way of thinking, and determine his manner of acting. He is good or bad, happy or miserable, wise or foolish, reasonable or unreasonable, while his will is powerless to change his nature or his mood. * * * Man is said to deliberate when the action of the will is suspended; this happens when two opposite motives act alternately upon him. To deliberate, is to hate and love in succession; it is to be alternately attracted and repelled: it is to be moved sometimes by one motive, sometimes by another. His will frequently fluctuates between two objects, of which either the presence or the ideas move him alternately: he waits till he has contemplated the objects or the ideas they have left in his brain, which solicit him to different actions; he then compares these objects or ideas: but even in the time of deliberation, during the comparison, pending these alternations of love and hatred, which succeed each other, and some-

times with the utmost rapidity, he is not a free agent for a single instant : the good and evil, which, he believes he finds successively in the objects, are necessary motives of these momentary wills—of the rapid motion of desire or fear that he experiences, as long as his uncertainty continues. From this, it will be obvious that deliberation is necessary, that uncertainty is necessary : that whatever part he takes, in consequence of this deliberation, it will always necessarily be, that which he has judged, whether well or ill, is most probable to turn to his advantage.—*System of Nature. Translated by H. D. Robinson.*

To say that the mind is free, in the sense given to that word by most theologians, is to say that it is subject to no law : but statistics prove that it is subject to laws.

“No man can say what may be the weather of to-morrow ; but the quantity of rain which falls in any particular place in any five years, is precisely the same as the quantity which falls in any other five years at the same place. Thus, while it is absolutely impossible to predict of any one Frenchman, that during next year he will commit a crime, it is quite certain that one in about every six hundred and fifty of the French people will do so, because in past years the proportion has generally been about that amount, the tendencies to crime in relation to the temptations being everywhere invariable over a sufficiently wide range of time. So also, the number of persons, taken in charge by the police in London, for being drunk and disorderly in the streets, is, week by week, a nearly uniform quantity, showing that the inclination to drink to excess, is always, in the mass, about the same, regard being had to the existing temptations or stimulations to this vice. Even mistakes and oversights are of regular occurrence, for it is found in the post-offices of large cities, that the number of letters put in without addresses, is year by year the same.”—*Vestiges of Creation.*

Absolute Truth Unattainable.—Ch. XXVIII.

The idealistic philosophy is very old. It was prevalent in India in the time of Alexander : it was common in Greece, and is very common in our own age.

“All that which is past is a dream ; and he that hopes or depends on time coming, dreams waking.”—*Bacon.*

“For anything I know, this world may be the bedlam of the universe.”—*John Adams.*

The Eleatic Philosophers said :—“Thought and its object are one.”

“Man is the measure of all things.”—*Protagoras.*

“I imagine a man must have a good deal of vanity who believes,

and a good deal of boldness, who affirms, that all the doctrines he holds are true, and all he rejects are false.”—*B. Franklin*.

“Truth in metaphysics, like truth in matters of taste, is a truth of which all minds have the germ within themselves.”—*D’Alembert*.

“And Naught

Is everything, and everything is Naught.”

Sir Wm. Hamilton quotes this from the *Rejected Addresses*, and says “Their ingenious authors have embodied a jest in the very words by which Oken, in sober seriousness, propounds the first and greatest of philosophical truths.”

“The highest knowledge is a consciousness of ignorance.”—*Sir Wm. Hamilton*.

“Doubt is the beginning and end of our efforts to know.”—*Same*.

“The highest reach of human science is the scientific recognition of human ignorance.”—*Same*.

Hamilton quotes the following :

“We know nothing in its cause ; for truth lies hid from us in depth and distance.”—*Democritus*.

“A man is wise while in the pursuit of wisdom—a fool, when he thinks it is mastered.”—*An Arabian Sage*.

“Who knows nothing, and thinks he knows something, his ignorance is two-fold.”—*A Rabbi*.

“If man should commence by studying himself, he would see how impossible it is to go farther.”—*Pascal*.

“Matter is incognisable absolutely, or in itself.”—*Aristotle*.

“Every belief which is proved by the inconceivableness of its negation to invariably exist, is necessarily true.”—*Herbert Spencer. Principles of Psychology*.

“We believe them [the first principles of reasoning] [only] because it is not possible to disbelieve them.”—*Brown*.

“The only account that can be given of our belief [in our own existence, etc.] is that it forms a necessary part of our constitution.”—*Dugald Stewart*.

“It seems now to be pretty generally agreed among philosophers that there is no instance in which we are able to perceive a necessary connection between two successive events, or to comprehend in what manner, the one proceeds from the other as a cause.”—*Same*.

“I know of only three or four arguments in the way of abstract reasoning that have been urged by philosophers to prove that things which begin to exist must have a cause. One is offered by Mr. Hobbes, one by Dr. Clarke, another by Mr. Locke. Mr. Hume, in

his *Treatise on Human Nature*, has examined them all, and in my opinion has shown that they take for granted the thing to be proved—a kind of false reasoning, which men are very apt to fall into when they attempt to prove what is self-evident.”—*Reid*.

It is a singular fact, as stated by Dr. Reid, that nearly all philosophers from Plato to Hume, agree in maintaining that the mind does not perceive external things themselves, but only their ideas, images or species.

“Next to the positive knowledge of things which may be known, the most important science is to know how to be ignorant.”—*De Luc*.

“To know that we cannot know certain things is in itself positive knowledge, and a knowledge of the most safe and valuable nature; and to abide by that cautionary knowledge, is infinitely more conducive to our advancement in truth, than to exchange it for any quantity of conjecture or speculation.”—*Granville Penn*.

“When Copernicus found that nothing was to be made of the phenomena of the Heavens, so long as everything was supposed to turn about the spectator, he tried whether the matter might not be better explained, if he made the spectator turn and left the stars at rest. We may make the same essay in metaphysics, as to what concerns our intuitive knowledge, respecting objects. If our apprehension of the objects, must be regulated by the properties, I cannot comprehend how we can possibly know anything about them *a priori*. But if the object as apprehended by us, be regulated by the constitution of our faculties of apprehension, I can readily conceive the possibility.”—*Kant, quoted by Whewell*.

“Though we should soar into the heavens, though we should sink into the abyss, we never go out of ourselves: it is always our own thought that we perceive.”—*Condillac*.

“The inevitable result of that reasoning, in which the intellect fancied it possessed within itself the centre of its own system is and from Zeno the Eleatic to Spinoza, and from Spinoza, to the Schellings, Okens, and their adherents of the present day, ever has been, pantheism under one or other of its modes, the least repulsive of which differs from the rest, not in its consequences, which are one and the same in all, and in all alike are practically atheistic, but only as it may express the striving of the philosopher himself to hide these consequences from his own mind.”—*Coleridge*.

According to Sir James Mackintosh, Reid, the great opponent of Hume’s idealism, virtually admitted that he has no solid foundation for his position. “He bawled out, ‘We must believe in an outward world,’ but added in a whisper, ‘We can give no reason for our belief.’”

“Many have taught that human life is but a dream, and I, too, always have had such a feeling. When I consider the narrow limits which bound the active and inquisitive faculties of man, when I see how all labor is employed to satisfy certain wants which again have no end save to lengthen our poor existence, and then that all satisfaction upon certain points of investigation is but a dreaming resignation, wherein man paints the walls, which imprison him with varied figures and sunny landscapes—when I consider all this, I am struck dumb, I turn back upon myself, and find a world which exists in anticipation and dark desire, more than in clear representation and living power. And then everything swims before my senses, and I smile on, dreaming farther into the world.”—*Goethe in Werter*.

“The fundamental tenet of the Vedanti school, to which in a more modern age the incomparable Sancara was a firm and illustrious adherent, consisted, not in denying the existence of matter, that is of solidity, impenetrability, and extended figure (to deny which would be lunacy), but in correcting the popular notion of it, and in contending that it has no essence independent of mental perception; that existence and perceptibility are convertible terms.”—*Sir Wm. Jones. Discourse XII.*

“There is no truth in the nature of things; or the mind of man, from some radical defect, is unable to discover it.—*Plato.*

“The Greenlanders,” says Cranz, “are fond of hearing tales of Europe; but they can comprehend nothing unless illustrated by some comparison. The town or country, for instance, has so many inhabitants, that several whales would hardly suffice to feed them a day; they do not eat whales, however, but bread, which grows out of the ground like grass, and the flesh of animals that have horns; and they are carried about on the backs of large strong beasts, or drawn along by them upon a wooden stage. On hearing this, they call bread grass; oxen, reindeer; and horses, great dogs; are struck with admiration, and express a wish to live in such a fine fruitful country, till they are informed that it frequently thunders, and no seals are to be procured there.”—*Herder.—History of Philosophy.*

How replace Christianity? Ch. XXX.

What is religion?

“The true religious philosophy of an imperfect being is not a system of creed, but as Socrates taught, an infinite search or approximation.”—*Mackay, Progress of the Intellect.*

Religion is a man's idea of the nature of his existence, the existence of the external universe and of its relations to him. In a common acceptation of the word, it means man's belief in regard to the existence of a deity, man's duties toward that deity, if any, and toward his fellow man and himself.

Shelley defines religion to be "man's perception of his relation to the principle of the universe."

Coleridge defines religion to be the union of the "subjective and the objective." The subject is the *Me*, the object is the *Not-me*. God is part of the *Not-me*, and according to Coleridge's definition, subjective and objective knowledge must be placed upon the same level, before a man can possess religion.

Palfrey defines Natural Religion to be "the Science of the being and attributes of God, of the relations which man sustains to him, and of the duty of man as they are discovered or discoverable by the human understanding, exerted without supernatural aid."

"Religion is the recognition of an ideal."

Theodore Parker quotes the following definitions of "Religion."

"A likeness to God according to our ability."—*Plato*.

"Reverence for the moral law as of divine command."—*Kant*.

"The union of the Finite and the Infinite."—*Schelling*.

"Faith in a moral government of the world."—*Fichte*.

"Morality becoming conscious of the free universality of its concrete essence."—*Hegel*. This is interpreted to mean "Perfect mind becoming conscious of itself."

"Immediate self consciousness of the absolute dependence of all the finite on the infinite."—*Schleiermacher*.

"The whole duty of man, comprehending in it justice, charity, and sobriety."—*Jeremy Taylor*.

"In India Polytheism sometimes led to rigid asceticism, and lofty contemplative quietism : in Rome to great public activity and manly vigor ; in Greece to gay abandonment of the natural emotions : in Persia to ascetic purity and manly devotion."—*Parker*.

"Every man worships a conception of his own mind."—*R. W. Mackay*.

"All idolatry is only comparative : the worst idolatry is only more idolatrous."—*Carlyle*.

"Religion is a state of sentiment towards God."—*F. W. Newman*.

"Religion is the culminating meridian of morals."—*Rev. James Martineau*.

"It is customary [among the Chinese] to ask to 'what sublime religion' you belong. One, perhaps, will call himself a Confucianist, another a Buddhist, a third a disciple of Lao-tze, a fourth a follower of Mohammed, of whom there are many in China, and then every one begins to pronounce a panegyric on the religion to which he does *not* belong, as politeness requires ; after which they all repeat in chorus, '*Pou-toun-kiao, toun-ly*.' 'Religions are many ; reason is

one ; we are all brothers.' This phrase is on the lips of every Chinese, and they bandy it from one to the other with the most exquisite urbanity."—*Huc's Journey through the Chinese Empire. Cap. V.*

"Religion without morality is superstition, which deceives the unfortunate with a false hope and makes them incapable of improvement."—*Fichte.*

Western legend says that, during the revolt of Texas against Mexico, the immortal Col. David Crockett made a tour through the Southern States to collect money and enlist soldiers. He made speeches, appealing to the passions and prejudices of his hearers, and dwelt particularly upon the strong points that the Mexicans prohibited Slavery and Protestantism. In one of his harangues he capped a high-piled climax with the following outburst : "The cursed yellow-skinned Mexicans want us to abandon our glorious religion, and go to work ourselves : God everlastingly damn them !"

The Thugs, the religious sect of professional murderers in Hindostan, are very strict in observing the ceremonial rules of their faith. "No men," says Sleeman, "observe more strictly in domestic life, all that is enjoined by their priests, or demanded by their respective castes, nor do any men cultivate with more care the esteem of their neighbors, or court with more assiduity the good-will of all constituted local authorities. In short, to men who do not know them, the principal members of these associations will always appear to be the most amiable and most respectable of the lower, and sometimes of the middle and higher classes, of society. The Thugs are good fathers, husbands, and neighbors. No Thug was ever known to offer insult, either in act or speech, to the woman he was about to murder."

"The worship of a mad tyrant [among the Hakemites] is the basis of a subtle metaphysical creed, and of a severe and even ascetic morality."—*Milman.*

Carlyle asserts that the advertisements of Christianity as a second "Morrison's pill," a certain and instantaneous cure for all possible and impossible ailments, are humbug.

"Religion she [Mrs. Nesbit] looked upon in the light of a ticket, which being once purchased and snugly laid away in a pocket-book, is to be produced at the celestial gate, and thus secure admission into heaven."—*Mrs. Stowe. Dred.*

"Fashionable religion visits a man diplomatically three or four times—when he is born, when he is married, when he falls sick, and when he dies—and for the rest, never interferes with him."—*Emerson.*

"A man is a Christian if he goes to church, pays his pew-tax,

bows to the parson, believes with his sect, and is as good as other people :—that is our religion.”—*Parker*.

“There is no pestilence in a state like a zeal for religion, independent of [as contradistinguished from] morality.”—*Bentham*.

“If a man has once been in Mecca as a pilgrim, do not live in the same house with him ; if he has been there twice, do not live in the same street with him ; if he has been there three times, leave the country where he lives.”—*Arabian Proverb*.

“So pious as to be utterly intolerable.”—*H. W. Beecher*.

“I went to visit——, whom I found unchanged, except that they are become a little more methodistical. I endeavored in vain to give them more cheerful ideas of religion—to teach them that God is not a jealous, childish, merciless tyrant, that he is best served by a regular tenor of good actions, not by bad singing, ill-composed prayers, and eternal apprehensions. But the luxury of false religion is to be unhappy.”—*Rev. Sydney Smith*.

Hell the Corner-stone of Morality.

“All nations have adored a master, a judge, a father. This sublime faith is necessary to mankind : it is the secret bond of society, the great foundation of justice, the curb of the wicked, and the hope of the righteous. If the heavens, despoiled of their majesty, could cease to manifest this existence, if God did not exist—it would be necessary to invent one.”—*Voltaire*.

“Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion.”—*Washington's Farewell Address, written by Alexander Hamilton. See Hamilton's Works.*

Bacon apparently thought that Christianity was not necessary for morality. He says : “Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation ; all of which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not : but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men.”

“In contending therefore that the benevolent affections are disinterested, no more is claimed for them than must be granted to mere animal appetites and to malevolent passions. Each of these principles alike seeks its own object, for the sake simply of attaining it. Pleasure is the result of the attainment, but no separate part of the aim of the agent. The desire that another person may be gratified, seeks that outward object alone, according to the general course of human desire. Resentment is as disinterested as gratitude or pity, but not more so. Hunger or thirst may be as much as the purest benevolence, at variance with self-love.”—*Sir James Mackintosh*.

"If there be no moral principle in the heart, whence, come these transports of admiration for heroic actions, this overwhelming love for great souls? What has man's enthusiasm for virtue to do with his physical gratification? Why should I rather be Cato piercing his own vitals than the conquering Cæsar? If we see an act of violence or injustice in the street or on the highway, an instantaneous feeling of anger and indignation impels us to take up the defense of outraged innocence. * * We hate the wicked because they are wicked. We not only wish our own happiness, but we wish that of others, and when their happiness costs us nothing, it increases our own. * * Every man feels pity at the sight of suffering. The most depraved are not without this feeling, which frequently places them in contradiction to themselves. The robber who despoils the traveller, covers the nakedness of the poor: the most brutal assassin will render assistance to a man who falls in a fit."—*Rousseau*.

"Kindness, honesty and truth, are of themselves, and irrespective of their rightness, sweet unto the taste of the inner man. Malice, envy, falsehood, injustice, irrespective of their wrongness, have of themselves, the bitterness of gall and wormwood."—*Chalmers*.

"Virtue is not only seen to be right—it is felt to be delicious. There is happiness in the very wish to make others happy. There is a heart's ease or a heart's enjoyment even in the first purposes of kindness, as well in its subsequent performances. There is a certain rejoicing sense of clearness in the consistency, the exactitude of justice and truth. There is a triumphant elevation of spirit in magnanimity and honor. In perfect harmony with this, there is a placid feeling of serenity and blissful contentment in gentleness and humility. There is a noble satisfaction in those victories, which, at the bidding of principle, or by the power of self-command, may have been achieved over the propensities of animal nature. There is an elate independence of soul, in the consciousness of having nothing to hide, and nothing to be ashamed of. In a word by the constitution of our nature, each virtue has its appropriate charm: and virtue on the whole is a fund of varied, as well as of perpetual enjoyment, to him who hath imbibed its spirit, and is under the guidance of its principles. He feels all to be health and harmony within and without, he seems to breathe in a atmosphere of beautiful transparency—proving how much the nature of man and the nature of virtue are in unison with each other."—*Chalmers*.

Prevalence of Freethought.

"All cultivated Chinese are—intellectually at least—strict and conscientious atheists."—*Meadows Ch XVIII.*

"Many of the middling classes [in Spain] are freethinkers or atheists."—*Dr. James Thompson. Quoted in Pearson on Infidelity Part II. ch. IV.*

"The bulk of the artizans and mechanics of London, and our great manufacturing and commercial towns have lost all regard and respect for Christianity."—*Christian Observer May, 1853.*

"Infidelity is generally most prevalent among those trades which admit of most intercourse among the workmen." *Pearson.*

"The church as it now stands no power can save."—*Arnold.*

"So far have we lost the true Christian knowledge of human nature, and relapsed into a heathenish anthropolatry, that the encouraging a spirit of self-dependence [self-reliance] is become an avowed aim in the modern theories and practice of education. * * Yet while we thus exalt and worship the very dregs [reason] of human nature, we have by a judicial forfeiture lost the faith, in its true dignity."—*J. C. Hare.*

"Two friends of the Church of England, who take any interest in her welfare, can hardly talk together in these days, but their conversation is sure to fall before long on the dangers that threaten her. * * Indeed, a month seldom goes by, but the sound as of some fresh crack in the walls of our Church seems to pass from one end of England to the other. * * Along with these lamentations, we commonly hear complaints about the growth and spread of infidelity and dissent. It is true these evils have reached a great and alarming height."—*J. C. Hare.*

"Experience demonstrates how learned men have been arch heretics, and how learned times have been inclined to Atheism."—*Bacon.*

Dr. Alexander, in his work on the *Evidences of Christianity*, says, "the Scriptures, although they contain the highest excellence of composition, both in prose and poetry, of which a good taste cannot be insensible, are neglected by literary men, or rather studiously avoided." And again, "This common dislike of the Bible, even in men of refined taste and decent lives, furnishes a strong argument for its divine origin." Let due credit be given to Dr. Alexander for the discovery of a new rule; *every doctrine rejected by men of refined tastes and decent lives is of divine origin.*

"I fear it is incontrovertible, that what is termed polite literature, the grand school in which taste acquires its laws and refined perceptions, and in which are formed much more than in any higher austere discipline, the moral sentiment, is for the greater part hostile to the religion of Christ."—*John Foster. Essay on "The Aversion of men of taste to Evangelical Religion."*

"Of all the great philosophers of this day, I think no one takes any interest in the popular forms of religion."—*Parker*.

"The class most eminent for intellectual culture is heedless of [the christian] religion throughout all Christendom."—*Parker*.

Stray Notes.

The Eleusinian Mysteries.

"Persons of both sexes and all ages were initiated. Indeed it was not a matter of indifference whether they would be or not: for the neglect of it was looked upon as a crime, insomuch that it was one part of the accusation for which Socrates was condemned to death. All persons initiated, were thought to live in a state of greater happiness and security than other men; being under the more immediate care and protection of the goddess. Nor did the benefit of it extend only to this life: even after death they enjoyed (as was believed) far greater degrees of felicity than others, and were honored with the first places in the Elysian Shades."—*Wilkinson. Ancient Egyptians. Ch. XV.*

"A comprehensive germ, which shall necessarily evolve all future developments, down to the minutest atomic movements, is a more suitable attribution to the Deity, than the idea of a necessity for irregular interferences."—*Dr. J. Pye Smith. Phil. Mag. XVI. 1840.*

"The fear of doubt is already a renunciation of faith."—*Rev. James Martineau.*

"The Scripture is the sole authority in matters of faith."—*Arnold.*

"Go to perdition if thou must,—but not with a lie in thy mouth."—*Carlyle.*

"Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."—*Jesus, in Luke. XIV. 33.*

"The reproduction of mankind is a great marvel and mystery. Had God consulted me in the matter, I should have advised him to continue the generation of the species by fashioning them of clay, in the way Adam was fashioned."—*Luther. Table Talk.*

'If Jehovah had ever seen the country about Naples, he would never have selected Canaan as a dwelling-place for his 'chosen people.'"

"Upon the whole, I have always considered him [David Hume], both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit."—*Dr. Adam Smith.*

“One old error is worth two new truths.”—*The Genius of Orthodoxy.*

Spirit of Calvinism.●

“I have not forgotten that you wrote to me that David hated the enemies of God with mortal hatred, nor do I intend to contravene it, or to derogate anything from it; for should I know that the king my father, and the queen my mother, and my husband and children were rejected of God, I would hate them with mortal hatred, and desire hell for them.”—*Princess Renée of France. Letter to Calvin.*

“The apocryphal history of the law-suit between the Jews and Egyptians, before Alexander, at Gaza, is well known. The Jews sued for the payment of wages due them for their labors in building the pyramids. The Egyptians presented as set-off a claim of damages for the jewelry stolen by the Israelites immediately previous to the exodus. Alexander dismissed the case, requiring each party to pay its own costs.”—*Voltaire.*

“There is in them [the four Gospels] a reflection of a greatness which emanated from the person of Jesus, and which was of as divine a kind as was ever seen upon earth. If I am asked whether it is in my nature to pay Him devout reverence, I say ‘Certainly!’ I bow before him as the divine manifestation of the highest morality.”—*Goethe. Lewes' Biography. Book VIII. Ch. IV.*

Theodore Parker on the Bible.

“View it in what light we may, the Bible is a very surprising phenomenon. In all Christian lands, this collection of books is separated from every other, and called sacred: others are profane. Science may differ from them, but not from this. It is deemed a condescension on the part of its friends to show its agreement with reason. How much has been written by condescending theologians to show that the Bible was not inconsistent with the demonstrations of Newton! Should a man attempt to reëstablish the cosmogonies of Hesiod, or Sanchoniathon, to allegorize the poems of Anacreon and Theocritus, as divines mystify the Scripture, it would be said he wasted his oil, and truly.

“This collection of books has taken such a hold on the world as no other. The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from that land of temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this book from a nation alike despised in ancient and modern times. It is read on each Sabbath, in all the ten thousand pulpits of our land. In all the temples of Christendom is its voice lifted up, week by week. The sun never sets on its gleaming page. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man, and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar, and colors the talk of the street. The bark of the merchant cannot sail the sea without it; no

ship-of-war goes to the conflict but the Bible is there. It enters men's closets; mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness of life. The affianced maiden prays God, in Scripture, for strength in her new duties; men are married by Scripture. The Bible attends them in their sickness, when the fever of the world is on them. The aching head finds a softer pillow when the Bible lies underneath. The mariner, escaping from shipwreck, clutches this first of his treasures, and keeps it sacred to God. It goes with the pedlar in his crowded pack; cheers him at even-tide, when he sits down dusty and fatigued; brightens the freshness of his morning face. It blesses us when we are born; gives names to half Christendom; rejoices with us; has sympathy for our mourning; tempers our griefs to finer issues. It is the better part of our sermons. It lifts man above himself; our best of uttered prayers are in its storied speech, wherewith our fathers and the patriarchs prayed. The timid man, about awaking from this dream of life, looks through the glass of Scripture, and his eye grows bright; he does not fear to stand alone, to tread the way unknown and distant, to take the death-angel by the hand, and bid farewell to wife and babes and home. Men rest on this their dearest hopes. It tells them of God and his blessed Son—of earthly duties, and of heavenly rest. Foolish men find it the source of Plato's wisdom, and the science of Newton, and the art of Raphael. Men, who believe nothing else that is spiritual, believe the Bible all through; without this, they would not confess, they say, even that there was a God.

“Now for such effects there must be an adequate cause. That nothing comes of nothing, is true all the world over. It is no light thing to hold with an electric chain, a thousand hearts, though but an hour beating and bounding with such fiery speed; what is it then to hold the Christian world and that for centuries? Are men fed with chaff and husks? The authors we reckon great, whose word is in the newspapers and the market-place, whose articulate thoughts now sway the nation's mind, will soon pass away, giving place to other great men of a season, who in their turn shall follow them to eminence, and then oblivion. Some thousand famous writers come up in this century, to be forgotten in the next. But the silver cord of the Bible is not loosed, nor its golden bowl broken as time chronicles his tens of centuries passed by. Has the human race gone mad? Time sits as a refiner of metal: the dross is piled in forgotten heaps, but the pure gold is reserved for use, passes into the ages, and is current for a thousand years hence as well as to-day. It is only real merit that can long pass for such; tinsel will rust in the storms of life: false weights are soon detected there. It is only a heart that can speak, deep and true to a heart: a mind to a mind, a soul to a soul: wisdom to the wise and religion to the pious. There must then be in the Bible mind, heart and soul, wisdom and religion: were it otherwise, how could millions find it

their law-giver, friend and prophet.' Some of the greatest of human institutions seem built on the Bible: such things will not stand on heaps of chaff, but on mountains of rock.

"What is the secret cause of this wide and deep influence? It must be found in the Bible itself, and must be adequate to the effect."—*Discourse on Religion*.

"Speedy end to superstition,—a gentle one if you can contrive it, but an end. What can it profit any mortal to adopt locutions and imaginations which do not correspond to fact; which no sane mortal can deliberately adopt in his soul as true; which the most orthodox of mortals can only, and this after infinite and essentially impious effort to put out the eyes of his mind, persuade himself to believe that he believes? Away with it; in the name of God come out of it, all true men!"—*Carlyle, Life of John Sterling*.

"One of the first things which must needs strike every reader of the New Testament, even the most thoughtless and careless, is the perpetual mention that is made of Faith, the great and paramount importance attached to Faith. Faith is there spoken of as the foundation, the source, and the principle of everything that can be excellent and praiseworthy in man,—as the power by which all manner of signs and wonders are to be wrought,—as the golden key by which alone the treasures of heaven are to be unlocked,—as the unshakable, indestructible rock on which the Christian church is to be built. When our Lord came down from the mount, where the glory of the Godhead shone through its earthly tabernacle, during the fervor of his prayer, and where his spirit was refreshed by talking with Moses and Elias on the great work he was about to accomplish,—when, after this brief interval of heavenly communion, he returned to earth, and was met by that woful spectacle of its misery and helplessness, physical and moral, the child who was sore vexed by the spirit, and whom his disciples could not heal,—and when, the cure having been wrought instantaneously by his omnipotent word, he was asked by his disciples why they had been unable to effect it,—he replied 'Because of your unbelief.' And then, having thus taught them what was the cause of their weakness, he tried to revive and renew their hearts by telling them how they might gain strength, and how great strength they might gain: "Verily, I say to you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say, to this mountain, 'Remove hence to yonder place:' and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you:" thus encouraging them by declaring the infinite power that lies in the very least Faith, if it be but genuine and living. In like manner, when the wonder of the disciples is excited by the withering of the fig-tree, he calls away their thoughts from the particular outward effect, to the principle by which such effects, and far greater, may be produced: "Verily, I say to you,

if ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say, to this mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea,' it shall be done." When we pass on from the Gospels to the Epistles, we find the power and working of Faith still more frequently urged, and still more emphatically dwelt in. The most inattentive reader can hardly fail to observe, how the justifying character of Faith, in its absolute exclusive primacy, forms the central point of St. Paul's teaching. And in the text we hear the Apostle of Love, joining his voice with that of him who is more especially the Apostle of Faith, proclaiming that 'this', and this alone, 'is the victory which overcometh the world, even our Faith.'"—*J. C. Hare. The Victory of Faith.*

"When moral rectitude is disjoined from [Christian] Faith, there is no trust in it."—*J. C. Hare.*

"Faith is trust."—*Luther.*

"There is no stability for morality, except in Faith."—*Hare.*

Just as the last pages of the *Evidences* are in the hands of the compositors, I have fallen upon a copy of Henry T. Prinsep's *Tibet, Tartary and Mongolia*. This work contains some interesting passages in regard to Boodhism, from which the author says that Christianity was derived. I make the following extract:—

"That the doctrines of Sakya-Muni spread widely over the Western world, as well as over the East, is sufficiently known and established. Pythagoras brought the doctrine of transmigration into Greece at a period, so close to that of the decease of Sakya-Muni, as to make it probable that he received it even from himself; but we have no direct evidence that the philosopher went further east than Babylon. The fact, however, that he derived his doctrines from an Indian source is very generally admitted; and it has other points of resemblance with Boodhism, besides the belief in metempsychosis or transmigration of souls. The discipline he established and the life of silence and meditation he enjoined, with the degrees of initiation introduced, which was a kind of successive ordination, correspond exactly with the precepts of the Pitakattayan, and the practices reported in the Attha-katha.

"The Pythagorean institutions also are described as very monastic in their character, resembling thus closely, in that respect also, the viharas of the Boodhists of India. The doctrines of Pythagoras were widely spread over Greece, over Italy, and Asia Minor, for centuries after his decease, and under the name of Mythraic, the faith of Boodha had also a wide extension. The general expectation of the birth of a great prophet, Redeemer, or Savior, which is alluded to even by Tacitus, as prevailing when Jesus Christ appeared, was, there can be no doubt, of Boodhistic origin, and not at all confined to Jews, or based only on the prophecies of their scripture.

Although, therefore the classic literature of that age affords no evidence of the precise character of this Boodhism, nor of the basis of scripture or tradition on which it rested, still the two facts,—*first*, the existence of these books in India at the period, and *secondly*, the wide spread in the West of the doctrines and belief, which rested upon them—may be considered as both well-established and not likely to be denied.

“Under the supposition of the preëxistence [and extensive prevalence] of Boodhism, such as these sacred books describe, and its professors still preach, the rapid spread of Christianity in the first and second centuries of our era, is not surprising. To a mind, already impressed with Boodhistic belief and Boodhistic doctrines, the birth of a Savior and Redeemer for the Western world, recognised as a new Boodh by wise man of the East, that is by Magi, Sramanas or Lamas, who had obtained the Arhat sanctification, was an event expected and therefore readily accepted when declared and announced. It was no abjuration of an old faith that the teachers of Christianity asked of the Boodhists, but a mere qualification of an existing belief, by the incorporation into it of the Mosaic account of the creation, original sin and the fall of man. * * * It would require an entire volume to compare in detail the several points of similarity [between Boodhism and Christianity], and to trace the divergence from the more ancient doctrine and practice, in the creed, and forms of ritual ultimately adopted by the church of the West. It is enough for our present purpose to establish the superior antiquity of the one, found to exhibit so many points of close correspondence.

“But independently of the similarity of doctrine, of ritual and of institutions, we know that Boodhism has run in the East a very analogous course with Romanism in the West. Having its classes of specially initiated and ordained teachers, it spread widely amongst the population, before it was adopted and made a state religion by the reigning sovereigns. It was torn to pieces by heresies and schisms on trivial observances and doctrinal points, till one sect, having enlisted the power of the state on its side, persecuted and expelled its opponent, to the weakening and ultimate ruin of the church and its authority. * * But the religion of Tibet and of China, differing widely in one respect from that of papistical Rome, is by principle tolerant. Believing that the human mind can by meditation and abstraction, arrive at the knowledge of divine truth, it concedes freedom of thought and conscience to all.”

Notices of Books, for the Information of those who may wish to examine further.

This book is confessedly only a compendium—a compilation of what has been written by others. It is but reasonable to presume that some of those who read it, may wish to examine further. For

the benefit of such I add some notices of books written for and against the Bible.

Christian Books

The four principal books in favor of the Bible may be said to be Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*, Butler's *Analogy of Religion*, Jenyn's *Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion*, and Paley's *Natural Theology*.

Paley in his *Evidences* bases his argument almost entirely on the miracles. After having closed the hearing of all the evidence which he has seen fit to adduce in favor of his faith, he says, "with us, upon the subject of the truth of Christianity, there is but one question, namely, whether the miracles were actually wrought."

He advances two main propositions. The first is "That there is satisfactory evidence that many professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labors, dangers and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts : and that they also submitted from the same motives to new rules of conduct." That the early Christians must have suffered much, he proves by the nature of the case, by the testimony of the Pagan historians of Rome, and by the accounts of the persecutions preserved in the New Testament and in the writings of the Fathers of the Church. He then endeavors to prove the truthfulness of the historical scriptures by showing that they were quoted by ancient Christian writers ; that they were held in peculiar respect ; that they were in early times collected into distinct volumes and distinguished by appropriate and respectful names ; that they were publicly read and expounded in the early Christian assemblages ; that commentaries were early written upon them ; that they were received by Christians of different sects and persuasions ; that the four *Evangelists*, the *Acts*, the thirteen *Epistles* of Paul, the first of John, and the first of Peter, were received without doubt by those who doubted concerning the other books of our present canon ; and that these propositions cannot be predicated of any other books.

His second proposition is that no other alleged miracles are supported by similar testimony. Thus, his whole argument rests upon his first proposition, which is unsound because neither the New Testament nor any other received history asserts that any Christian martyr has witnessed a miracle of the apostles.

Although Paley rests his case on the miracles, he does not neglect other testimony. He introduces the prophecy of Isaiah (*Ch. LII*), which relates to Jacob, and not to Jesus, and the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, which was probably, or at least, for all we know to the contrary, written after the event. He then introduces the morality of the Gospel, admitting at the same time,

that "morality, neither in the Gospel nor in any other book, can be a subject, properly speaking of discovery." He then endeavors to show that the character of Jesus is represented in the same manner by the four evangelists, and that the character is an original one. The most successful portion of Paley's essay, is that wherein he attempts, and I think successfully, to show that the matter of the four gospels was written by persons who lived in the apostolic age, and were acquainted with the state of affairs in Judea, in the time of Jesus. He does not show, however, that each of the four evangelists had separate means of knowledge. Such is about the substance of Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*. John Foster writes thus of Paley: "It has been the enviable lot of here and there a favored individual, to do some one important thing so well, that it shall never need to be done again: and we regard Dr. Paley's writings on the *Evidences of Christianity* as of so signally decisive a character, that we should be content to let them stand as the essence and the close of the great argument on the part of its believers; and should feel no despondency or chagrin, if we could be prophetically certified, that such an efficient Christian reasoner would never henceforth arise. We should consider the grand fortress of proof, as now raised and finished, the intellectual capital of that empire, which is destined to leave the widest boundaries attained by the Roman far behind."

Butler's *Analogy of Religion* is a work of much fame, but as it appears to me, of no great merit. Seven-eighths of the book are occupied with the consideration of analogies in nature, going to show that there are no antecedent improbabilities in the general scheme of Christianity, and one-eighth is devoted to the positive evidences in its favor—which are limited to miracles and prophecies.

As analogical to a future life, he finds that men have at different times different mental and physical powers, and different capacities for pleasure and suffering. There are also changes in capacities and states of life in lower animals, as the caterpillar changes to the chrysalis, and the chrysalis to the butterfly. Now that we have "capacities of action, of happiness and misery", "before death is a presumption that we shall retain them through and after death." "There is really no particular distinct ground or reason for apprehending that our living powers will be destroyed by death. The mind is one and indivisible, not at all dependent on the body, but merely residing in it, as is proved by the fact, that the loss of an arm or leg does not weaken the intellectual powers." And thus he goes on, building his castle in the air, as a zealous Christian might before the birth of physiology.

As to his analogies for a future state of rewards and punishments, a moral government of the universe by an anthropomorphic divinity, and the probability that this world is a state of proba-

tion, I cannot consider them worthy of a place here, but refer the curious to the work itself, hoping that they may find more information, and take more interest in it than I could. Brougham says, it is "the most argumentative and philosophical defence of Christianity ever submitted to the world." Dr. Arnold says, it is "one of the greatest works in the language." Chalmers "always reckoned" Bishop Butler to be "one of the best and wisest of writers."

Soame Jenyns, in his work on the *Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion*, lays down the following points, viz. :

"*First.* That there is now extant a book entitled, the New Testament.

"*Secondly.* That from this book may be extracted a system of religion entirely new, both with regard to the object and the doctrines, not only infinitely superior to, but unlike everything which had ever before entered into the mind of man.

"*Thirdly.* That from this book may likewise be collected a system of ethics in which every moral precept founded on reason is carried to a higher degree of purity and perfection than in any other of the wisest philosophers of preceding ages ; every moral precept, founded on false principles, is totally omitted, and many new precepts added, peculiarly corresponding with the new object of this religion.

"*Lastly.* That such a system of religion and morality could not possibly have been the work of any man or set of men ; much less of those obscure, ignorant and illiterate persons, who actually did discover and publish it to the world ; and that, therefore, it must undoubtedly have been effected by the interposition of the Divine power, that it must derive its origin from God."

The works in favor of the Bible, which have appeared most readable to me, are the books of *Channing* and *Palfrey*, entitled *Evidences of Christianity*.

The only noteworthy defense of the genuineness of the Mosaic books is to be found in Hengstenberg on the Pentateuch. The same author, in his *Christology of the Old Testament*, endeavors to show that the Hebrew prophets foretold the coming of Jesus.

The ablest defense of the genuineness of the four gospels is that of Norton. It is, as Greg says, "a work full of learning, resolutely applied to the establishment of a foregone conclusion."

Leibnitz wrote on *The Conformity of Faith with Reason*, and *The Theodicea*, on the Origin of Evil. Chalmers says "Leibnitz is rightly held to be the most philosophical defender of Christianity in its own peculiar and evangelical form." We should not say that he is the most effective defender of it, an honor which we should rather ascribe to Jonathan Edwards." I must confess that I have not been able to find anything in the controversial works of Leibnitz save words.

The principal writings of Jonathan Edwards are his Essay on

the Will, and Sermons exalting the merits of Hell. Chalmers says "There is no European, divine to whom I make such frequent appeals in my class-room, as I do to Edwards; no book of human composition which I more strenuously recommend than his *Treatise on the Will*."

The best argument for an anthropomorphic divinity is that in Paley's *Natural Theology*; the best attempt to justify the moral government of the universe, supposing it to be under the control of an omnipotent and anthropomorphism is that of Plutarch.

Kitto's *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature* is the best work of its kind.

T. H. Horne's *Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures* is a valuable book. It is not the work of a great man, but of a sensible and very industrious student. The book replies to more objections against the Bible than any other Christian work. He treats of the necessity of a divine revelation, the genuineness of the Biblical books, their preservation, the testimony of the miracles and prophecies, the Biblical morality, the "wonderful harmony" of the Scriptures, their tendency "to promote the temporal and eternal happiness of mankind;" the superiority of Christianity to all other religions, etc.

Several books have been written by Christian authors to give a view of the arguments and evidences adduced by anti-Christian philosophers. The best of these books are those of Leland and Pearson.

Leland wrote about a hundred years ago, and Hume is the latest author whom he notices. He pretends to give the arguments of Lord Herbert, Hobbes, Tindal, Toland, Chubb, Blount, Morgan, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke and Hume, confining himself to English writers. He misrepresents the freethinkers badly, but was probably not conscious of the misrepresentation, having been blinded by his own religious zeal.

The most readable of this class is Pearson's *Infidelity, its Aspects, Causes and Agencies, being the Prize Essay of the British Organization of the Evangelical Alliance*. Pearson treats his subject under the following heads:—"Atheism, or the Denial of the Divine Existence; Pantheism, or the Denial of the Divine Personality; Naturalism, or the Denial of the Divine Providential Government; Spiritualism, or the Denial of the Bible Redemption; Indifferentism, or the Denial of Man's Responsibility; Formalism, or the Denial of the Power of Godliness." The author pretends to represent the arguments of the different classes of anti-Christian philosophers, but he misrepresents them.

Anti-Christian Books.

The ablest work on the genuineness of the Old Testament books is *The Introduction* of De Wette. It has been translated by Theo-

dore Parker. I have obtained my evidences on the genuineness of the Bible principally from this book. De Wette has also written an *Introduction to the New Testament*. It is good but it does not demolish the gospels as his other book does the *Pentateuch*. It has not been translated.

The Life of Jesus critically examined by Dr. D. F. Strauss exposes the mythical nature of the histories of Jesus. It is a very learned and able work ; but its minute examination of the particular myths is tiresome.

Hume's essays on *Miracles, Providence, and a Future State, Liberty and Necessity, and Skeptical Doubts* are among the ablest philosophical writings in existence.

The Progress of the Intellect as exemplified in the religious development of the Greeks and Hebrews by R. W. Mackay, is a learned, instructive and well-written book : but it lacks unity, compactness and often interest. It frequently dwells to tiresomeness on details, and does not give sufficient prominence to the main features of the "religious development." Besides the religious histories of Greece and Judea are so different, distinct and comprehensive that, it appears to me, they should have been treated in separate works or have been included in a work on the religions of all nations. With all these faults however, the work is a very valuable one ; as every reader will discover who seeks information upon either Greek or Jewish mythology and confines his attention to the chapters devoted to that subject which interests him.

Comte's *Positive Philosophy* is a very philosophical review and classification of all the classes of human knowledge. In the course of his book he takes occasion to treat Christianity as a worn-out system. He says that man cannot discover the final *causes* of phenomena and should confine his attention to the *laws*. In Lewes' *Biographical Dictionary* he is styled "the Bacon of the XIXth century."

Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* is an attempt to show that all religious systems are the natural and necessary productions of the human mind in different stages of development.

I do not consider any of the above works to be suited to the general reader.

Hennell's *Origin of Christianity* is a learned, able, clear, and interesting. The author argues well against the genuineness of the gospels, the trustworthiness of the miracle-reports, the applicability of the O. T. Messianic prophecies to Jesus, and the originality of the teachings of Jesus. This work has not had the same and circulation which it deserves.

Bentham's *Not Paul but Jesus* is a thorough exposure of the imposture of Paul in claiming to be a Christian. I have condensed his argument in Ch. V.

Paine's *Age of Reason* and Volney's *Ruins* have had a larger

circulation than any other books written against the Bible. Both are interesting and intelligible to every understanding, but neither contains much information.

The XVth and XVIth chapters of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* are devoted to criticisms on the early growth and condition of Christianity. They are very interesting.

Rousseau's *Emile* contains an episode called *The Confession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar*. In this confession, Rousseau argues against atheism, against taking revelation on hearsay, and in favor of the character and morality of Jesus.

Bayle's Historical and Critical Dictionary was first published in 1697. Bayle is one of the greatest of modern skeptics. As Voltaire says "His bitterest enemies are forced to confess that there is not a line in his works which contains an evident blasphemy against the Christian religion; but his most zealous defenders avow that in the controversial articles, there is not a page which does not lead the reader to doubt and often to incredulity." His most celebrated articles are those on *David*, the *Manicheans*, *Pyrrhonisme*, and the *Paulicians*.

The Vestiges of Creation [by Robert Chambers?] is an able, interesting and instructive work, written to advocate Laplace's theory of the formation of the universe and the "Development Theory" of the formation of the animal kingdom. The work has been greatly abused because it had great influence. The author, says of the book, in the preface to the tenth English edition:—"It never had a single declared adherent,—and nine editions have been sold. Obloquy has been poured upon the nameless author from a score of sources,—and his leading idea, in a subdued form, finds its way into books of science, and gives a direction to research. Professing adversaries write books in imitation of his, and with the benefit of a few concessions to prejudice, contrive to obtain the favor denied to him."

The Phases of Faith by F. W. Newman is a good picture of the travels of the Christian through the dogmas of Christianity, but the book is best suited for those who have believed and studied the Mysteries of the Trinity, Incarnation, Adam's Fall, Atonement, etc. The Rev. James Martineau has written an excellent review of the work.

Newman's *Hebrew Monarchy* is the only English history of the Jews worthy of notice. It exposes the unreliable character of the Biblical history, and shows up the wickedness of the chosen people. It is an able, and interesting book.

The Creed of Christendom by W. R. Greg, is a well-written book. The author attacks a great many of the Christian dogmas, and all that he says is worth the saying; but he does treat any portion of the subject thoroughly

The System of Nature attributed to Baron D'Holbach is the

best work in favor of atheism. Its style is clear and forcible Brougham says it is 'The work of a great author.'

Man's Nature and Development by H. G. Atkinson and Harriet Martineau is an able work against anthropomorphism, but it is rather fragmentary in its character.'

Shelley's *Queen Mab* with its notes is decidedly hostile to anthropomorphism.

Byron wrote no work directed specially against the Bible, but he inserted many anti-Christian sentences in *Childe Harold*, the *Vision of Judgment*, and *Cain*.

Carlyle and Emerson have not expressed their religious opinions clearly in any of their works, nor has either made an open attack on the Bible.

Voltaire exercised an immense influence on the religious opinions of his century ; but his anti-Christian writings have been superseded by later, more learned and more complete works. His *Philosophical Dictionary* was his chief work against the Bible.

Taylor's *Diegesis*, Higgin's *Anacalypsis*, and Dupins' *Origine de tous les Cultes* are learned works written principally to show that the doctrines of Christianity were derived from heathen nations and had, mostly, their origin in astronomical symbolism. Each of these books contains interesting passages, but all of them are inconclusive and unsatisfactory. The authors were smothered under their learning.

The best work on Religious Symbolism is that of Creuzer, as translated and improved by Guigniaut. It has not been translated into English.

One of the best critical works on the anti-christian side is *The Doctrines of Christianity depicted in their historical development and in their struggle with modern science* by Dr. D. F. Strauss. It has not been translated into English, but it is probable that I shall undertake the work.

Koehler-Glaube und Wissenschaft [Science and Superstition] by Prof. Karl Vogt, *Der Kreislauf des Lebens* [The Circulation of Life] by Prof. Jacobus Moleschott, and *Kraft und Stoff* [Matter and Force] by Dr. Buechner, books published within a few years in Germany, have had a great circulation there and have had much influence on the public mind. The main purpose of all is to prove that mind is a mere function of the brain. They have not been translated into English.

Errors.

Vol. I. p. 109. The two tribes which adhered to Rehoboam were not Judah and Levi but Judah and Benjamin.

Dr. Kitto, editor of the *Biblical Encyclopedia* was not a "bishop," as I have in several places styled him.

Vol. II. p. 146. The Jewish prophets were not all priests in office, but they were in feeling.

The statement of the doctrines of the Arminians on page 162, Vol. II. is taken, not from *the* Arminian "Confession of Faith," but from Mosheim's definition of their doctrines. The Arminians assert that God sends his grace, sufficient to save, upon all men, but that only those will accept that grace whom he from all eternity foresaw would do so.